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The Saturday Review of Literature

EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

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Strange toils, within the wood's dark heart are ended,
The night's long rites begin, the fears draw nigh;
Through silence like a demon's laugh suspended
The ghostly, gesturing twilight tiptoes by.

England

THERE are two Englands: the England of Galsworthy, Wells, and Bennett, of Shaw and Hardy and Barrie; and the England of the young (or youngish) intellectuals, of Aldous Huxley and the Sitwells, of Strachey, T. S. Eliot, and Virginia Woolf, of David Garnett and his attendant miniaturists, of Joyce and the Joyceans. It is a literary England divided and subdivided into coteries through which figures of noble independence sail unperturbed—Tomlinson, C. E. Montague, E. M. Forster, de la Mare—and where some of the older generation are perennially young—Hardy and Shaw and May Sinclair,—and some of the new generation are prematurely and preternaturally old. Yet the difference between the prophets and the sons of the prophets is as wide as the rift across which old Milton looked at Dryden, saying, "Yes, you may tag my verses."

For it is already clear that the generation of Wells and Shaw wrote and still write in the great Victorian tradition that the poet and novelist and playwright should be spokesmen for England, and if for England, for the world. Their conception of literature is social. Social ideas obsess them as they obsessed Byron and Shelley. The reforming spirit is ever hot in their breasts, nor are they ever far from philosophy. They are not troubadours, or wits, or paragraphists, but literary statesmen. Hardy legislates for Fate, Wells for God, Shaw for Reason. They are all poet laureates with a felt duty to England and humanity. And their literature reflects the nineteenth century greatness of England, the power of an empire loosely hung and badly organized but functioning on the plane of greatness, self-confident, energetic, generous. Sure of a future because they have seen a great past, they are prolific of books, and little troubled by artistic inhibitions for their energy sweeps them aside. The War, that froze or parched the younger men and women, gave them new dangers, new opportunities for theme, and their minds, accustomed to the world thinking of an imperial England, rose refreshed for another span of active life. Wells dropped studies of marriage for histories of the world, Galsworthy began to sum up his era in the "Forsyte Saga," Shaw became a prophet of a grandiose future, Gilbert Murray left Athens for Geneva, only Barrie's gentle humor was quenched by the new seriousness.

The statesmen of British literature have no successors. The political intellectuals of England have deserted literature for economics, Liberalism has given way to Socialism, Toryism to Capitalism, and by neither is the creative imagination urged to generous expression. Literature in young England has retired to its closet to write its diary and refine its style. The newer writers are negative by instinct and by choice. They are early old and wilted by the strains of war. In the survivors of the great conflict the springs of generous energy have dried up; they are parsimonious of their enthusiasms, and quite unwilling to spend themselves upon the idealizing of a world which shook down their youth.

Furthermore, they live in a precarious England which is still the brains, but no longer the cause, of an empire. The peak of British self-confidence is behind them; having known collapse, they have no taste for glory, no expectation of leadership, no pride in the possibilities of an English-speaking world of which England is only a factor. They were born too late for the Periclean grandeurs and view Alexandrian dreams with skeptical dislike.

* * *

In the meantime, like the French, they cultivate their gardens, but not in the same way, nor for the same reason. The political and social ideas of England are still grandiose, and may, like the culture of the Greeks, have new victories dated long after the supremacy of the race that made them. In spite of the new vigor of English trade which is struggling across strikes and unemployment to its world markets again, it is not true that the major energy of England today is industrial. It is still a home of ideas powerfully invented—perhaps more now than ever.

But the new literary England is in its study trying to recapture the cutting edge of eighteenth-century satire, writing brief exquisite replicas of earlier styles, studying the weaknesses of Victorian enthusiasm with cold and critical subtlety, lest any great man escape with his adjective still tied to him, closing one eye to get a fresh view of human nature, and rearranging our English phrases in the attempt to express the nuances and the aberrations which the careless elders left untouched. Wit has come into fashion again and a *mot* is broadcast over London.

Since morality, politics, philosophy, and religion are unfashionable except in their negatives, the literary craftsman, freed from these grave responsibilities, has time to consider his art. The language of this middle generation is sharp and careful. By comparison, Wells sprawls, Shaw is sometimes crude, Hardy often dull, and the Victorians are convicted of empty sonorousness or sentimental rhetoric. There is no padding in Virginia Woolf for the details, trivial though they may be, are carefully chosen. There is no Swinburnian sonorousness in Edith Sitwell or Humbert Wolfe, for a phase of a phase, not the adumbration of a great idea, is what they seek. This new literature is fine not strong, subtle not rich, critical of results rather than imaginative in cause. And it is literary literature, an art form, where the craftsman in words has too obviously a contempt for blundering souls

(*Continued on page* 100)

Portrait of a Novelist

By EMIL LUDWIG

BALZAC was continually driven. What was it that drove him? Did he have passions which cost him hundreds of thousands? Were there such items as extravagant mistresses, exacting minions, gambling halls, or jewels? Nothing of the sort. A good table wine, a beautiful vase, perhaps even a little celebration now and then, but neither women nor horses nor travels. His one driving force was the climber's hankering after some vague ideal of splendor; it was his ambition to be counted among the élite, to have his passport of genius visèd by the authorities. Also, he insisted that to get a good price in Paris one must have a prosperous appearance, and he assumed a sophisticated manner which was intended to dumbfound his publishers and editors.

Thus it happens that Balzac, who was not recognized when he stormed into the printer's in the morning wearing gray and black checkered trousers, with heavy shoes, a red shawl around his neck, and a slouch hat on his head, in the afternoon drove his tilbury through the Bois in person, while his groom behind was in readiness should the nag decide to bolt. He had a fashionable tailor fit a blue frock-coat tight across his stomach, he ordered of the leading jeweler of Paris a cane with a jeweled head; but he also appeared at tea with the duchess of Abrantès and was to be seen in the evening among the celebrities of the time in a loge of the Théâtre des Italiens. He was not disturbed when Gavarni, who mistook him in civilian clothes for a traveling salesman, caricatured him as a dandy. Nor did he suspect how these marquises and duchesses laughed at the title and the coat of arms which he bluntly bestowed upon himself, styling himself "Monsieur de Balzac d'Entragues," although he had no trace of kinship with any such family, and his father had been the first to write the peasant name of "Balsas" with a "*c*." But the son insisted upon his nobility, and his pseudonyms were invariably titled names of his own inventions!

This was Balzac, who as a man of letters was

This Week

Drawing. By *W. A. Dwiggins.*
Quatrain. By *William Rose Benét.*
"A Collection in the Making." Reviewed by *Alfred H. Barr, Jr.*
"The Spanish Journey." Reviewed by *Robert Medill McBride.*
"A Wiltshire Parson." Reviewed by *Norman Foerster.*
"Dusty Answer." Reviewed by *Eleanor Carroll Chilton.*
"Three Wives." Reviewed by *Elmer Davis.*
"The Bright Threshold." Reviewed by *Nathalie S. Colby.*
"Marco Millions." Reviewed by *Mary Cass Canfield.*
Our Younger Intellectuals. By *John Bennett.*

Next Week, or Later

Publicity: A Satiric Poem. By *Lee Wilson Dodd.*

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one of the first writers to portray the growing power and vitality of the fourth estate, and who was past master at depicting the decadence of the flashy women of the aristocracy, but who as a man of fashion had no higher ambition than to be admitted into that very same society. This was Balzac, the most powerful critic of society, whose fondest hope was that he might become, not a popular leader in parliament, but a peer of France.

Rembrandt in his middle period also wanted to give the world a spectacle. But he only adorned house and wife, dreaming of chains, casques and mirrors, and feasting his painter's eye on effects of texture and light — and when all this was taken from him, he calmly withdrew into one little room and painted beggars like kings. Balzac, once he was gripped by this madness, never again got free of it and sacrificed his life to this illusory purpose. He furnished a house ornately and invited Rossini, the epicure, and his mistress as guests, borrowing the silver from his publisher, since his own was in pawn. "I will provide the finest wines, the greatest delicacies, the rarest flowers; in short, I will give my best." How? Is Balzac's best nothing but an imitation of Rothschild? "Rossini avowed he had never seen the equal at the home of any prince, that he had never eaten better or drunk better. He sparkled with enthusiasm."

* * *

His debts doubled under usurious rates of interest; the mountain which separated the poet from freedom became more and more impassable; court bailiffs followed him everywhere; in order to escape writs of execution he went into a house with entrances on two streets, and he fled from Paris. Thus his rapidly growing reputation was dearly bought. He placed twelve volumes on contemporary society — not a word of which had yet been written—for an advance of 26,000 francs, and his letters show that he was much more gratified over this transaction than at the completion of many a

> And now who would honor the publisher's
> An author was already asking himself this
> n a hundred years ago. Thus he paid his
> rs with drafts, so as to get back now and then
> hundred francs in cash. Then he bought

Chinese vases and took them to the pawn shop four days later.

He compared his publishers to the vulture of Prometheus, and on another occasion insisted that they "think of nothing but plunder." "Some day," he wrote to one of them while traveling, "and that day is not far off, you will have made your fortune out of me; our carriages will pass in the Bois; your enemies and mine will burst with envy. Your friend, R. de B." Postscript in microscopic letters: "Apropos, dear friend, I have nothing left, so I have raised 1,500 francs from Rothschild and drawn a draft for that amount on you, due ten days after sight."

The situation was chronic. As his reputation and earning power increased, his pretensions and phantasms increased proportionately. He lived like a hermit, requiring but a few hundred francs a month; but he doubled his debts by his absurd purchases and had to speed up the tempo of his work accordingly. "This frightful need of money, this demand, which has just driven me to write 'Honorine' in three days, will also force me to finish 'Le Dernier Amour' in three days. You do not know how this continued pressure humiliates me."

* * *

Thus in one year he wrote two totally different books, "La Recherche de l'Absolu" and "Père Goriot," the latter being turned out for a magazine in six weeks, during which time he had but eighty hours' sleep. He, a genuine poet, never once speaks of moods or other such ornaments of the soul. Figures, always figures. 200 hours a month, at y pages an hour, makes x volumes in half a year. "The 'Député d'Arcis' has four volumes, with one hundred characters in all, so you can well imagine how much head-work the book requires." Always like manual labor.

Since he considered writing as a routine to be learned, and since he claimed that he had written for so many years under pseudonyms "to limber up his arm," he was tireless in his attention to the details of his trade and looked upon his work with the practicality and self-confidence of a master. He instituted lawsuits to prevent the pirating of his works, and when he won his case he wrote a sensational preface within a few hours and set up two editions in two days. If he founded a magazine, it must forthwith "beat all the others," whereat he lost 40,000 francs. He organized an authors' league, proposing a vulgar farce to one of his comrades, and to another a drama for which he had nothing but the last sentence. In addition to his major works he was continually turning out sketches, editorials, feuilletons, and Paris letters for the newspapers, in which he chats about tobacco and wines, the new cabinet, the tariff policy, good food, and gloves. "Everything must file past," he writes gayly to a friend; "the light penny literature as well as the society novels and the great thoughts which no one understands." As a way to get subscribers for an edition of his complete works, he thought of giving his readers annuity contracts in combination with the books.

He had such a reservoir of energy, and work came so natural with him, that he readily assumed new obligations. And under the pressure of these obligations he had to expend still more of his energies, so that his enormous innate capacity for work became even further developed during the course of his life. "If the artist does not plunge into his work like Curtius into the abyss, if he does not toil within this crater like a miner buried alive . . . then he is guilty of murdering his talent. For this reason the same reward, the same laurels, are held out to the poet as to the leader of an army."

Did he, through writing so much, write loosely?

He treated his galleys, he said, like a she-bear licking her cubs. He did not merely revise *ad nauseam*, he also consulted experts. He was never conten', he knew how to profit by intelligent criticism; and often when getting out a new edition he would work over his old novels sentence by sentence, while writing at top speed on new ones. At times he even surpassed his own records: in a fever of work, he kept all the compositors in readiness until e l in this same night, on tw nplished the Ascension of ll revisions. At the close c ars after the beginning o were over a hundred completed novels to carry Balzac's name around the world.

* * *

What was the source of this enormous output?

If one looks at his first portrait, one will observe a youth with wide open, eager eyes. The eyes have no expression of meditation or awakening; they are aggressively reaching out for things. He sees what he hears, he sees what he reads, converting everything into the present, into a picture, since only contemporary life can arouse his talent. He seldom dealt with the past, and the few books in which he did so can be discarded without loss. He despised authors who can only express themselves in terms of Rome or Hellas. The one thing in history that interested him was France, the France of the present and the immediate past. At first this was a kind of instinctive economy; afterwards it became a deliberate program, but it was never mere nationalism. He needed a background for his novels, and he found it ready to hand in his own country.

Although he had read a jumble of everything, he had never studied, merely collecting whatever might serve his purposes. However, all this was stored away in a monstrous memory which retained everything—words, places, expressions—with the same fidelity. Since he possessed the power of creative imagination which marks the born writer, he did not need to parcel himself out autobiographically. He hardly ever borrowed situations from his own life, and even more rarely characters, never portraying himself, and only fragmentarily copying rooms, landscapes, or sensations. Like Shakespeare, he had no eye for individuals, but always saw beyond them to the type; he had observed every species of *homo sapiens*, and for this very reason had never created a character *à clef*. Neither Vautrin nor Gobseck, Lucien nor Rastignac, Esther nor Delphine were drawn by him from nature, though the romantics regularly derived their characters in this way, and even Goethe did so at times. Yet, while he produced types, his keen observation and his sound sense of reality spared him from the danger of empty abstractions.

It is hard to forget his characters because of certain subtle peculiarities of theirs which seem rooted in distant re ons. "Many little details which you have l e forgotten," he writes to his mistress, "w p me awake for half the night when I am ng without success for subjects. One time I see the footpath from Diodati or the gravel of the central avenue in the Parc Monceau, another time it is a certain emphasis, a certain almost childish pressure of the hand, while we looked at pictures together."

To be sure, the types which angered him most in life—brokers, lawyers, and usurers—are the ones with which, through a natural thirst for vengeance, he was most successful. But he also depicts with equal saliency and color: *petits bourgeois* and peasants, the class from which he came, and marquises and duchesses, the class toward which he was climbing, and soldiers and officers, a class which he particularly envied. Yet he never went out deliberately in search of facts. It was only at twenty, while he was still scanning verse, that he purposely observed people—workmen in the suburbs, vagabonds, and children—but at that time he had no thought of copying them. Later, "observation became mechanical with me. Without surveying the body, I could delve into the mind: yes, through comprehending all the details of people's lives, I was able to go beyond them. I could share another's experiences by putting myself in his place."

* * *

He did, however, study his backgrounds. No one has ever had a more intimate and a more relentless understanding of the Paris of his times. He traveled through certain departments purely in search of descriptive detail. The greatest landscape he ever studied, that vast, unending Gobelin on which he never ceased weaving, was the era of Napoleon. When Balzac was born, in 1799, Bonaparte was overthrowing the directorate. When the emperor boarded his last vessel, Balzac was sixteen. His father had already written an appeal for a gigantic monument; the son saw in Napoleon quite simply a kindred genius, and in reality the basic traits of their two characters can be compared, since they both owed their work to the same combination of imagination and energy.

Yet the statesman could only attract the epic poet as a prototype, not as a theme. He collected in a notebook all the sayings of Napoleon he could find, and later sold these 500 maxims for 4,000 francs to a hatmaker who thought that they might help him to get into the Legion of Honor. The poet would never have undertaken to portray the emperor, who passes through Balzac's great tragi-comedy solely like a god, intangibly present, appearing only two or three times *ex machina* in his own person. It was the environment or background of Napoleon that appealed to the novelist. Thus, he absorbed the stories of an old duchess and of an animal-tamer who had been with him in Egypt; he drew out grenadiers and baggage carriers, priests and provisioners; he learned of the battle of Wagram from Schwarzenberg's son; and he devoured the anecdotes of Metternich. Yet suddenly he goes beyond all authentic detail, and in the "Country Doctor" an old soldier who had become a rural letter-carrier tells the peasants in a barn the story of the emperor as though it were an ancient legend.

For what good would he—or any other poet—have derived from keenness of observation if this observation were not again and again lost in the diffuse light of the common sun and were not the sharp outlines of reality bathed in the golden glow of this delusion! Thus even in his first novels he intuitively disclosed the empty existence of those titled women to whom he himself was later to fall victim; and if he expended much time, money and brains solely that he might sit at a prince's tea table, he also portrayed the mistress of such salons, the beautiful Feodora, as she lies in bed at night and, before abandoning herself to sleep and her paramour, studies the stock reports.

> My instability is the result of my imagination, which can receive one thing after another and yet remain virginal, as untouched as a mirror which is never tarnished by what it reflects. This mirror is in my brain. . . . To what do I owe this gift? I do not know. A second sight? I have never examined it; I possess it and use it. . . . With me nothing ages. Everything which ever moved me is as vivid as though it had occurred yesterday. A tree, a river, a mountain, a vista, a word, a glance, distress, happiness, danger, excitement, even the sand or the tiniest event, everything is reflected inside me, each day I feel it all anew and with greater force.

From this belief perhaps, this feeling that his consciousness was mounting towards the universal, he arrived at a state of mind which might be called Balzac's unhappy love. For this falcon-eyed stalker

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of mankind, of all authors the most sensuous, had a remarkable hankering after the super-sensuous. Even in his youth he collected information about magnetism and mesmerism. Later he studied Swedenborg; he believed in mental telepathy, prophesying to Gall and Lavater the revival of interest which they are enjoying today. And in the last analysis he prized none other of his works so highly as his magnificent though imperfect "Séraphita," the only book on which he ever worked over a period of years. This and "Albert Savarus," his two mystical novels, are immersed in an overly brilliant light which is foreign to his realism. He believes in them, for "one can write a 'Père Goriot' any day, a 'Séraphita' but once in a lifetime."

And yet it seems as though despite his energy he recoiled from subjects which he felt to be beyond him—and in one letter he makes a confession whose full purport even he himself could hardly fathom: "If when I go to bed, I am not tired and sleepy, then I am lost, for the moment just before falling asleep, when one is delivered up to himself and the infinite, is a disastrous one for me."

Here are his natural limits. When he meets himself too much alone, without energy and movement, Balzac turns back obediently into the realism of his era.

This sketch forms part of one of the portrait studies included in Emil Ludwig's "Genius and Character," shortly to be issued by Harcourt, Brace & Co.

American Painting

A COLLECTION IN THE MAKING. By DUNCAN PHILLIPS. New York: E. Weyhe. 1926. Washington: Phillips Memorial Gallery. $5.

Reviewed by ALFRED H. BARR, JR.
Wellesley College

IF it is a book on painting, whether a volume of essays, or a text book, or a cataalogue, one turns instinctively to the illustrations. "A Collection in the Making" is magnificently provided. One comes first of all on a fine plate of a Daumier convincingly reproduced in color in almost exactly the size of the original. A woman leads a child by the hand. They move across a bridge in the moonlight. The countercurved figures, the amazing boldness of contour, remind one of Tintoretto's tempera drawings. Daumier's power, his tonal harmony, his dramatic grandeur, his compositional sense, are epitomized in this small picture. It is worth the price of the volume. Less fortunate is the color print of Renoir's grand Déjeuner des Canotiers. Then follow large half-tones—a Greco St. Peter, a fine incisive Bellotto, a late Constable, amazing in its frank disintegration of form by light. One remembers the original—sky and foliage slashed with red, white, and blue, like Rubens before him and Renoir later. Four Corots equally divided, as they should be, between landscape and figure studies. And then *mirabile!* Six more Daumiers—surely the finest group in any public gallery. Has the Metropolitan a Daumier—has Boston? Then follow a Guys, the proud and solid Courbet Rocks recently shown at Reinhardt's, three Monticellis, a Sisley and Pissarro, the inevitable Monets, one of the most important of Père Cézanne's Mont St. Victoire, Redon and Bonnard and André in fine examples. Seurat, de Segonzac, Matisse, we hear have recently been added, though too late for publication. Mr. Phillips is to be congratulated. More great Frenchmen are needed.

Over one hunded and fifty of the two hundred reproductions are devoted to American painters from George Inness and Whistler to the present day. The impressionists Twachtman, Lawson, and Childe Hassam; and then a surprise equalling the seven Daumiers—seven Albert P. Ryders—a magnificent group, possibly unsurpassed. Then come Prendergast's tapestries, Arthur B. Davies in his various affectations, the paint splashers, such as George Luks, dashing and empty. Sargent, however, is delightfully absent. One remembers with anguish the Metropolitan's recent $90,000 purchase. How many Ryders has the Metropolitan? Then after a modicum of still-born Boston still life, we come to our contemporaries in spirit—the men deriving from Renoir and Cézanne, Marquet, Picasso, and Matisse. Here are Halpert, Glackens, Maurice Sterne, Max Weber, and Preston Dickinson, all well ensampled. Finally, the precisionists, Demuth, Sheeler, Niles Spencer, and Georgia O'Keeffe, accompanied by Rockwell Kent, Edward Hopper, the prodigious John Marin, and many, many others.

One stops to wonder if it is at all possible to discover any character peculiar to contemporary American painting. This is certainly one of the finest and most catholic collections ever assembled. Can one isolate a pervading spirit, a dominant quality, or even a dominant and a recessive, such as are perceptible in Russian, German, English, or Italian painting of the moment? Has American painting of the past any individuality? Positively, it is technically competent; negatively, it is provincial or eclectic. What more? For an expression of national character we must still depend on our movies, automobiles, and department stores, the *American Mercury* and interviews with visiting English lecturers?

"I was born in a substantial old house of what had already become downtown Pittsburgh, where the gas-jets flared even on days when the sun could faintly penetrate the smoke. Looking back on my childhood in that house, I do not remember the pictures." Thus Mr. Phillips begins the story of his pictorial adventures and continues in graceful prose to disclose the growth of his magnificent idea. "The Phillips Memorial Gallery differs from the usual type of museum. My constant aim is not merely to exhibit but to interpret—" "Instead of the grandeur of marble halls and miles of chairless spaces—the effect of domestic architecture—of the intimate attractive atmosphere which we associate with a beautiful home." "My idea is not to show all our treasures at once but in ever varied *purposeful* exhibitions—frequently changed so that the walls—

ROSAMOND LEHMANN
Author of "Dusty Answer" (Holt)
See page 101

reveal interesting transformations." "My arrangements of pictures are for the purpose of contrast and analogy—Thus I demonstrate the antiquity of modern ideas or the modernity of old masters—a universal language defying classification." As Courbet said: "There are only true artists and pretenders."

The gallery is famed for its "inclusiveness." This is the result of a deliberate policy "for in one of its phases the collection is an Olympus of Immortals" while in another it is a laboratory for testing "contemporary aspirants to fame with Time and the aforesaid Immortals to act as Judges." "There must be a few collectors bold enough to make mistakes." "I shall not live to know whether the men in whom I have believed have justified my faith in their future. *I take my chance of being wrong.*" The Metropolitan, apparently, takes no chances of being wrong—it buys National Academicians and thus quite neatly eliminates the chances of being right.

Mr. Phillips's esthetic is disappointing in that it seems scarcely to do justice to his collection. "Art offers two great gifts of emotion—the emotion of recognition and the emotion of escape"—or again "the power 'to see beautifully' is almost all there is worth bothering about in art." But isolated quotations are inevitably unjust and, after all, it is not a collector's ratiocinations upon the philosophy of art that are important so much as his pictures, which are a direct expression of his taste—and Mr. Phillips has bought seven Daumiers.

The brief estimates of artists which preface the plates are sensitive, personal, occasionally witty, and often possessed of extraordinary charm of language. Of Cézanne he writes—"A formula for color application not only determined his pattern but vitalized it with a palpitancy like Greco's, a breathing in and out of all things which seems to have haunted him as the principle of unity in Nature." "Charles Sheeler's work is clean, deft and drastic, like that of a skilful surgeon." "There was in Bellows the journalist's or the showman's desire to be the cause of shocks and sensations, and in this capacity he painted nudes, revival meetings, prize fights, war's atrocities, and a crucifixion, all essentially with the same intention."

Occasionally Mr. Phillips's enthusiasms carry him too far. The wraiths of Raphael, Tintoret, Veronese, and Rubens would smile in Paradise were they to read that the gentle Puvis de Chavannes had "carried mural painting to the greatest heights it had known since Giotto." There are minor errors. Henri Rousseau, *le douanier*, is apparently confused for a moment with Théodore Rousseau, the Barbizon master. There is very little evidence of Signorelli's influence on El Greco, or of Greco's influence on Cézanne. But in so magnanimous a book it is mean spirited to notice these lapses—unless it be for the benefit of the second edition.

In conclusion, it might be well to emphasize again the three-fold value of "A Collection in the Making." It is, first of all, the record of enthusiasm for an ideal, of a generous and in the best sense public-spirited ambition. Secondly, it is a collection of charming and frequently discerning critical vignettes. Lastly, in the reviewer's estimation, it is the most comprehensive and valuable anthology of the last fifty years of American painting thus far produced.

Discovering a Master

THE SPANISH JOURNEY. By JULIUS MEIER-GRAEFE. Translated by J. Holyroyd-Reece. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1927. $5.

Reviewed by ROBERT MEDILL MCBRIDE

NEARLY twenty years ago the author of this book, an art critic of distinction in Germany, gratified a long cherished wish to visit Spain and study Velasquez, then recognized as the real progenitor of the art of our generation, in the country of his nativity. His intention was not only to see the great collection of Velasquez's paintings in the Prado, without a study of which it is really impossible to form an adequate judgment of his work, but to view his canvases hanging in churches and palaces throughout the country. To become acquainted with the soul of Spain through an intimate acquaintance with the people and their early architectural achievements in the scattered cities of the realm was a coincidental desire.

His experience and conclusions were as startling as they were unexpected. Journeying there with the expectation of exalting his idol to a higher place in his worship he remained to dethrone him without compunction and place a new deity in his stead. And because of this change of front the world is indebted to Julius Meier-Graefe for its belated recognition of one of the world's greatest masters—Domenico Theotocupulos, known as El Greco, the Greek expatriated in ancient Toledo. Considering this generation's universal recognition of El Greco's genius, it seems almost incredible that a score of years ago his name was almost unknown outside of Spain. As the translator says in his preface to the work:

> When the original edition of his book was published it caused a sufficient sensation in his attack on Velasquez. It is difficult, however, to realize today how startled the art critics were to find Meier-Graefe announcing El Greco as one of the greatest masters of all time. Although the great Greco biography of B. M. Cossio had appeared in the same year in which "The Spanish Journey" was written the world at large had never heard of El Greco, whose three volume biography was accessible only to specialists who could read Spanish.

The author with his companions left the steamer at Lisbon and entered Spain through the gateway of Portugal, visiting the principal towns *en route*. Upon reaching Madrid he was unable to control his impatience to see the incomparable collection of his idol's masterpieces, and rushed off at once to the Prado. Here, in his own words, are his first impressions of this visit:

> I saw practically nothing until I reached my goal. The El Grecos, which one must pass, looked like inebriated phantasies. Goya's *Mayas* dreadful rubbish. . . . Nothing but the one, the great, the unique Velasquez! It seemed to me as if for years I had lived for no other purpose

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than to experience this moment. From the very first moment in the Velasquez room I felt that something painful and ludicrous was happening. . . . It happened with the deadly certainty with which the train enters the station.

Four days later, having allowed his impressions to mature, he become conscious of the compelling power of a new affection for he enters this in his diary: "Visited Bernette in the morning. His El Grecos exceeded all expectations. *The Expulsion from the Temple* is one of the marvels of humanity. . . . Tintoretto, but a hundred fold more luminous, more pure." A little later conviction is certain and a new deity has captured his heart evidenced by a note which says: "When I was in front of the El Grecos I felt as if I were, so to speak, listening again and again to a flaming chord which reëchoed in the case of Velasquez vaguely, and in a tremor, like a very, very faint echo."

And so he went from city to city, traveling leisurely, studying the pictures, commenting on them, appraising their artistic values, philosophizing about art, and all the while getting no end of pleasure out of his holiday sauntering through the cities and rubbing elbows with the people. The further he journeyed the greater became his admiration for El Greco, and the more impatient he grew with the work of his dethroned god. At the Escorial he spent three weeks, a captive to the sheer beauty of the El Grecos which hang there, especially to *The Legend of Saint Mauritius* which he regards as the most beautiful picture in the world. At this point he declares that El Greco stands with equal claim side by side with Rembrandt and that both divide the world between them.

At Toledo, discussing the emotions produced by great art in its various branches, he declares that: "El Greco, however, comes like a flash of lightning. . . . Our calculations ever since we wore long trousers were based upon three continents: Michael Angelo, Rembrandt, Rubens. Now there is a fourth." At Granada he undertakes a direct comparison and tells of the divine spark which lies in the work of the Greek:

You should see El Greco beside this incomplete creature (Velasquez) and how the violet in his palette grows much more violet in his picture, how his red becomes more burning and how his white which is not even pure grows luminous. The reason for this is simply that the impulse of the painter is in every part and particle, as the sun is on every leaf in the garden. . . . This luminosity comes from the presence of this man in his color, from his creative power which conjures up from the object of the picture a new existence beyond reality. It is the language which is missing in the rigidity of Velasquez, the sound of the invisible.

Returning to Madrid after a two months' tour of the other cities he becomes vehement in his condemnation of the other masters of Spanish painting and more than ever convinced of his discovery of a Colossus in the realm of art. In addressing a letter to a friend he says:

By way of a joke I send you a photograph of the *Christ* by Velasquez and the *Christ* by Goya. When I think that there are people who prefer the academic charlatanism of Velasquez and, if they do that, they have no reason for not revering this stuffed noodle by Goya! . . . I believe Rembrandt is the only painter whose work one can accept by the side of El Greco's *Crucifixion*.

In his pursuit of Spanish art the author, as has been mentioned, visited all the important cities of Spain, and wrote in a fragmentary way, of his experiences, giving staccato impressions of the buildings, the bull fights, the people and their customs. He makes no attempt, however, to visualize the cities or to capture their atmosphere. Nor do you get more than fleeting glimpses of the people. He is primarily concerned with art and his more serious comments on other subjects are directed at the architectural values of the historic buildings which come under his eye. But such comment, which is always shrewd and penetrating and usually in high good humor, is incidental to his main purpose. Those who know Spain with its amazing contrasts, its striking contradictions and above all its shattering of illusions, could wish that he had applied his keen analytical powers and philosophical comments to the cities and country through which he passed. But, of course, that would have made another kind of book. So "The Spanish Journey" is primarily a volume for those who are sophisticated in the realm of art, although there is much between its covers that will entertain the cultured reader. The translator deserves special commendation for the excellent rendering into English of a book which presented many difficulties because of its chatty, interpretive and ejaculatory character.

Coleridge on Romance

A WILTSHIRE PARSON AND HIS FRIENDS: The Correspondence of William Bowles. Edited by GARLAND GREEVER. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 1926. $3.50.

Reviewed by NORMAN FOERSTER

JOHN LIVINGSTON LOWES, having seen part of this book in manuscript, has already indicated in "The Road to Xanadu" the new light that it throws on Coleridge's poetry. There is other matter of interest in the letters written by Crabbe, Southey, Moore, Rogers, etc., as well as those by the poet Bowles himself (especially some fresh facts regarding the Bowles-Byron controversy), but the really valuable part of the book consists of two letters and four reviews by Coleridge which the editor has discovered. In one of the letters—both of which concern the tragedy "Osorio"—Coleridge describes his ideal of poetic style: "I have endeavored to have few sentences which *might not* be spoken in conversation, avoiding those that are *commonly* used in conversation." This he wrote in October of 1797, while he was working on "The Ancient Mariner," a year before Wordsworth made his bungling statement that *he* was aiming at "the language of conversation in the middle and lower classes of life," and some half a dozen years before the slow thought of Wordsworth, bringing him round at last to his friend's earlier conception, impelled him to say that his object was to employ "a selection of the language really spoken by men." Here is fresh evidence that in the intellectual relations of the two poets Coleridge was the leader.

* * *

In the other letter, after describing his tragedy as "'romantic and wild and somewhat terrible,'" and acknowledging that he is "almost weary of the terrible," Coleridge discloses the fact that he has been "an hireling in the *Critical Review* for these last six or eight months," "reviewing 'The Monk,' 'The Italian,' 'Hubert de Sevrac,' etc., etc., in all of which dungeons, and old castles, and solitary Houses by the Sea Side, and Caverns, and Woods, and extraordinary characters, and all the tribe of Horror and Mystery, have crowded on me—even to surfeiting." By finding and reprinting the reviews here alluded to, Professor Greever has proved what has hitherto only been surmised: that Coleridge was intimately familiar with the "Gothic novels" of the eighteenth century, and that we are justified in seeking to relate "the tribe of Horror and Mystery" with "The Ancient Mariner" and those other contributions of Coleridge to the Renascence of Wonder in which, as he said later, he sought "to transfer from our inward nature a human interest and a semblance of truth sufficient to procure for these shadows of imagination that willing suspension of disbelief for the moment which constitutes poetic faith." We shall become convinced, I believe, that Coleridge availed himself of a popular literary convention; that he saw clearly both the weaknesses of its famous practitioners and the poetic possibilities latent in it; that he wrote his own poems in this kind mainly as a *tour de force*, though not without infusing delicately his characteristic spiritual earnestness; and that the true bent of his mind was already, in this happy confused time of the Somerset idyl, leading him from every semblance of spooky supernaturalism toward metaphysic and the transcendent verities of religion.

* * *

Certainly, as the reviews show, Coleridge became increasingly indifferent to the exploitation of mysteries and horrors at the very time that he was showing how they could be used consummately in hauntingly musical verse. In the earliest of the reviews, that published in 1794, the first sentence links the author of "The Mysteries of Udolpho" with Shakespeare himself, on the ground that, while Mrs. Radcliffe lacks variety, she is "completely in possession of" the key that unlocks the gates of horror and wonder, "keeping us, as it were, upon the very edge and confines of the world of spirits."

Three years later, in a review of "The Monk," the first sentence reads: "The horrible and the preternatural have usually seized on the popular taste, at the rise and decline of literature." He then proposes the Gothic vogue in England as an instance of decline, and trusts "that satiety will banish what good sense should have prevented." After remarking on the author's excellences, Coleridge asserts that his defects are more important, and these defects in part inhere in the Gothic romance itself. "All events," he complains, "are leveled into one common mass, and become almost equally probable, where the order of nature may be changed wherever the author's purposes demand it. . . . The writer may make us wonder, but he cannot surprise us. For the same reasons a romance is incapable of exemplifying a moral truth." It appears even to invite positive violations of moral truth. Let the author

work *physical* wonders only, and we will be content to *dream* with him for a while; but with the first *moral* miracle which he attempts, he disgusts and awakens us. . . . We feel no great difficulty in yielding a temporary belief to any, the strangest, situation of *things*. But that situation once conceived, how beings like ourselves would feel and act in it, our own feelings sufficiently instruct us; and we instantly reject the clumsy fiction that does not harmonize with them.

In the third review, Coleridge begins by declaring that "It is not difficult to foresee that the *modern romance*, even supported by the skill of the most ingenious of its votaries, would soon experience the fate of every attempt to please by what is unnatural." Since its concern was only with terror, since it evoked terror by trickery, and since it was not braced by observation of real life, it must degenerate into dull repetition. "The Italian" confirms our suspicions, being inferior to the author's "Mysteries of Udolpho," as that in turn had been inferior to her "Romance of the Forest." Finally, in the fourth of these reviews, Coleridge briefly accounts for Mrs. Robinson's "Hubert de Sevrac" as "an imitation of Mrs. Radcliffe's romance," and winds up his review, and the whole matter, by crisply reminding writers of novels "that this taste is declining, and that real life and manners will soon assert their claims." This review was published in August, 1798, about the same time as "Lyrical Ballads," in which he left "real life" to Wordsworth, while he himself trod angel-like where fools had failed, and achieved the miracle of "The Ancient Mariner."

England

(*Continued from page* 97)

who pour out an unreflecting style in the interest of mankind. It is a closet literature.

There is small chance of greatness in this highly professional writing of English, but that does not condemn it. After the loose journalism of H. G. Wells, a Virginia Woolf and an Aldous Huxley were inevitable, and the easy good humor of Barrie leads around the corner to the Sitwells. Every Macaulay has his Strachey, or should have, and if language becomes propaganda someone has to reduce it to language again. The criticism to be made upon the salon school of English literature is of its self-sufficiency, not its usefulness. It has borrowed an intellectual provincialism from France which makes it content to let the world take care of itself while London refines its accent and its taste. The expected result is that the British literati begin to take in each other's washing. Or if that becomes too unprofitable, the highbrows write for the lowbrows in all the cheaper newspapers, content to make their work popular by diluting to a local taste. The highbrows are catering to the lowbrows or each other, said an acute English critic, the broadbrows in literature will soon be extinct.

The lions of pre-war England still roar from their lairs, but leopards possess the jungle.

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A Hymn to Spiritual Beauty

DEATH COMES FOR THE ARCHBISHOP. By WILLA CATHER. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1927.

Reviewed by LEE WILSON DODD

AFTER reading "Death Comes for the Archbishop," I indulged myself in a critic's day-dream; and found myself not too patiently trying to explain this book—so reticent, so distinguished, so beautiful—to a rebellious young person in very short skirts who rather petulantly had asserted that she was an incarnation of Average Public Taste in America.

"You say, my dear child, that Miss Cather's novel has bored you; that you couldn't get through it; that it isn't really a novel at all. When I ask you why it isn't really a novel, you maintain there's no story in it—by which, obviously, you mean there's no 'love story' in it. In this as in most things you are wrong and—don't bother to forgive me, sweet child!—rather pathetically stupid. There is a great, a very great, love story in Miss Cather's masterly, quiet narrative. It is a severe, purely designed chalice of hand-beaten silver, filled to the brim with the white essential wine of love—love of man to man, love of God to man, love of man to God.

"True, it nowhere lures you to identify yourself with some fair, and conceivably frail, heroine whose neurotic organism is asquirm with sexual desire. In this respect, I am forced to admit, it fails your instinctive expectations pretty badly; and unless you can (temporarily) free yourself of these anticipatory longings, this book is not for you. But if you can manage to survive this disappointment and attune your mind (may I daringly presume you have one?) to less customary harmonies, harmonies both throbbing deeper and lifting higher than the common range, I venture to assure you that you will soon forget to be bored."

However, not even in day-dream could I longer continue, for my rebellious young person in very short skirts had already vanished, leaving behind her merely an echo of jazz and faint whiffs of perfumed lip-stick, aromatic chewing-gum, and synthetic gin. . . .

* * *

"Death Comes for the Archbishop" tells how a young man, Jean Marie Latour, once a seminarist in Auvergne, rode with difficulty into the newly erected territory of New Mexico as Vicar Apostolic, and of the wise and good works he wrought there for many years, until, mourned by all his people, "the old Archbishop lay before the high altar in the church he had built." Is it a narrative of fact—biography in the guise of fiction? Or is it an independent creation, a fabric woven of many colored strands, sombre or brilliant, drawn from the annals of our Southwestern frontier? I do not know; and while I shall be interested to learn, if I am ever to learn, I do not greatly care. For this much is certain: by putting unforgettably before us the life (actual, wholly imagined, or partly imagined) of Father Latour, Miss Cather has also given us *truth*, has brought to us a quintessence distilled from a given region, with all its forms and modes of being, throughout a selected, unifying stretch of years. No artistic purpose is more difficult of fulfilment; and to indicate Miss Cather's stature as artist, it is enough to say that in the present novel one such staggering attempt has been serenely and triumphantly carried through.

* * *

But that is not all; it is far from all.

Range through the world's literature and ask yourself how many convincing portraits you can remember of a good and great man. You will not, I fear, recall many. . . . Well, here, at least, is one such portrait—winning, human, and complete. But no, there are *two* such in this extraordinary book, and they are finely differentiated! Father Vaillant and Father Latour . . . both living men, and utterly unalike, except in their central shining goodness—for I can think of no other word to express their quality. It is the love of these two men for each other, for their God, their Church, and their body-breaking and often heart-breaking tasks which makes of this book a grave, uplifting hymn to Spiritual Beauty. It is nothing less than that.

Nothing less . . . and it has, perhaps, turned one astonished reader a little giddy in the head. The whole thing was so unexpected. Intellectual and Spiritual Futility Blues have been so much more in our modern line. So if there are any artistic faults in this book (as there well may be, man being what he is) I confess that I was far too stirred to note them.

Whither, Life?

DUSTY ANSWER. By ROSAMOND LEHMANN. New York: Henry Holt & Co. 1927. $2.50.

Reviewed by ELEANOR CARROLL CHILTON

Author of "Shadows Waiting"

Ah, what a dusty answer gets the soul
When hot for certainties in this our life.

THOSE who read many novels usually fall into the necessity of helping the author out—pretending that his patched characters are of whole cloth, filling in the meagre outlines of thought, and recapturing from their memories the pictures which are only hinted at with descriptive words. Here, however, is a book which is glowing with life, with an exciting intensity of emotion; a book to which one abandons oneself, knowing instinctively that the author can be trusted to carry her story with a fine and delicate assurance.

Judith Earle, the only child of a quiet and somewhat remote house, grows up companioned by visions and ghosts of the past. These dream children are real enough, in that they had once lived in the house next door, and had become so dear to her that she was never again able to disentangle their names and faces and personalities from the exciting patterns they wove in her imagination. Charles, the weakest and loveliest, who was killed in the war; his erratic brother Julian, passionate, awkward, and always defeating his own ends; and their cousins, Mariella the mysterious, Martin the faithful, and Roddy, who was the most puzzling and exciting and wonderful of all—these five playmates of a summer were a part of the very fabric of Judith's existence, growing up in harmony with her mind which had recreated them, and in this way preparing for her most of the tragedies of her youth. Because, of course, when they finally moved back to the house beyond the cherry tree they had grown up in their own way, and not in hers. They had become more irresistibly themselves, and very much less what Judith had made of them in her secret imaginings; and yet they were still so much the same, so like the old faces and personalities which had provided the materials for her dreams of them, that Judith inevitably fell to expecting of them a fulfilment of old, outgrown promises.

One other person assaults Judith's emotions, and is stamped ineradicably upon the unfolding outlook of her mind. This is Jennifer, whom she meets at Girton. The two girls become passionate friends and monopolize each other happily for two years. But the friendship is severed violently, and though it trails loose threads to the end of the book, Jennifer leaves Cambridge abruptly; leaves Judith with a lonely and restless desire which soon becomes love for Roddy—Roddy who was a dark dream that could never materialize, even for himself.

* * *

The rest of the story shows the rise to effective tragedy of all the emotional complications which had been latent in the relationships between the four remaining "children;" the destructive and never-to-be-adjusted tangle which had been spinning itself from their most ardent desires. And Miss Lehmann abandons Judith, finally, leaving her still caught in the web which had woven about her; still held, but held only in the memories left behind by vanished lovers and friends.

The actual story of this novel is old enough. But "it is only the roughness of the eye that makes any two persons, things, situations, seem alike;" and Miss Lehmann has a most rarely perceptive and delicate and fancifully humorous eye. It is a joy to read her prose, for she has the poet's gift of making a new experience of every familiar beauty, without in any way brushing off the bloom of its familiarity.

Yet the book has a fundamental weakness, and the mere fact that she has been able to invest its incidents with a lucid glow, an ecstacy of personal comprehension, does not in any way mitigate it. The beautiful moments build up toward nothing. The book never finishes. Judith, when we leave her forsaken and wondering what to do next, has not, it seems to me, received a dusty answer. The certainties of the soul concern the soul alone, and in loneliness we find or fail to find them. Judith, one feels sure, is intact and inviolable in apparent defeat. Herein lies her vivid reality. In the first dawn after her darkest night, Judith decided that she might write a book. "She was a person whose whole past made one great circle, completed now and ready to be discarded." And if Judith had written her book it would probably have turned out to be "Dusty Answer." If I have any complaint against the book it is that Miss Lehmann has not used her insight, her ability to freshen old words into new ones, her humor, and all her rare gifts, to make a book which Judith could *not* have written.

The Woods of Weir

THE DARK CHAMBER. By LEONARD CLINE. New York: The Viking Press. 1927. $2.

Reviewed by ALLAN NEVINS

IN this his third novel Mr. Cline attempts an experiment in horror. In a story which at times reminds us of the subtleties of "The Fall of the House of Usher" and at times of the crudities of "Dracula," he essays to create an atmosphere of ghostly terror. It is filled with violence—suicide, assault, battle between man and beast: it is overhung by a dark pall of the occult if not the supernatural. The setting is supposedly a gloomy estate in the Jersey woods behind the upper Palisades, but actually the events occur in some far off crepuscular land of romantic melodrama. All the elements, the style, the characters, the stage properties, are carefully selected to achieve an effect which at times seems coming within the author's grasp, but which in the end he unmistakably misses.

It is the style which is the most distinguished feature of the book: a style marked by genuine artistry in words and by a true poetic vision, yet often by an inability to distinguish between what is beautiful and what is merely precious. He writes of "the trusting of young plumules of corn in the dun fields of early June." He says of his heroine Janet that "there would be a lecherous muted whine in her orchestration." He describes midnight in the grisly old mansion as "gushing in, tripping up the yellow flame of the candle on the dresser, which wrestled gallantly with the dark invader, until in every corner of the lofty wainscoted chamber shadows hunched and reared and panted waiting their moment to pounce." As one dead body is carried away he speaks of "the coroner's grandmotherly clucking care." He describes how "in orpiment and filemot the pageant woods glowed"; how a girl sang a song that "fell in languid portamento through green chromatic intervals." It is striking, it is not infrequently effective, but its total effect is a bit false, and for those who regard style as something more than filigree-work with words, it is often more than a bit irritating.

So all-important is the atmosphere of brooding, phantasmal terror which the author invokes, that any brief summary of the action does a certain injustice to the book. It is sufficient to say that the central figures are the dark, necromantic master of Mordance Hall, named Richard Pride, its passionate, vehement, wanton mistress, his wife Miriam, their young daughter Janet, and Pride's assistant, Oscar Fitzalan, who tells the story; and that the element of mystery is furnished by Pride's secret wizardries in his hidden laboratory, while the element of conflict springs from Fitzalan's lustful intrigue with Miriam and his spiritual love for Janet. Pride is ostensibly carrying on an investigation into the subconscious memory, and trying to fill serried shelves with a record in minute detail of all his past sensations, emotions, and ideas, gleaned from the memory of seventy active years. We are given to understand that in reality he is experimenting not only with drugs, as a stimulus to memory, but with black art. In Miriam and Janet there crop out diverse traits of deviltry. To enrich the plot we have several hangers-on, including an assistant of Pride's who kills himself at a crucial moment, and a great dog Tod—"Tod. Death. What a forbidding name for a dog!" cries Fitzalan—who in the end fights a battle to the death with his master Pride. The final scene shows the indomitable Pride, the passionate Miriam, and the ugly brute Tod all stretched out stiff and stark, with Fitzalan (still uttering bursts of rhetorical preciosity) clasping Janet in his arms. We half expect Mordance Hall to sink, like another House of Usher, into some gloomy tarn, but it does not.

For reasons not difficult to analyze, the book

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does not quite come off. It is too obviously a hollow contrivance, a thing of stagey devices and artificial style. It fails to achieve a climax, for the reader quickly perceives that there is nothing really awe-inspiring in the activities of Pride in his "secret chamber." Yet even in its failure the book has qualities which inspire unusual respect.

Wives and Husbands

THREE WIVES. By BEATRICE KEAN SEYMOUR. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1927.

Reviewed by ELMER DAVIS

HERE is reason to be thankful for the stupidity of censors. "Three Wives" is one of the best novels that will be published this season; one does not need to read the others to predict that. Mrs. Seymour unites a bitterly clear perception with an exquisitely civilized sense of balance; she knows exactly what she is doing and exactly how to do it; her theme offers temptations to mawkish or hysterical excursions but she never loses her head. And she handles all her characters with a scrupulous, clear-eyed fairness; there are wives and husbands in this book for whom one is inclined to prescribe the sashweight as the only remedy, yet she forces the reader to confess that the worst of them are caught in a net not of their own weaving. Dreiser does this too, and perhaps more powerfully; but some of us are antique enough to prefer Mrs. Seymour's suave clarity to Dreiser's turgid flounderings. At least it is no crime to like them both.

Yet, if our watchdogs of public morals had any intelligence, they would suppress this book as tending to corrupt not only the morals but the morale of youth. For it is a critique of love and its workings, from which one is forced to draw the conclusion that the course of evolution which made the human race bisexual was a terrible mistake, that love is the gravest affliction that has ever befallen mankind. That will discourage romantic young people, if there are any of them left; and this dutifully anti-romantic generation will be equally distressed by the news that even though love is as bad as that you can't do without it—not mere casual passion, but the headlong, devastating, absolute love.

It is hard to imagine a more subversive doctrine. If young people believe this and act on it—and the whole justification of obscenity laws lies in the supposition that the behavior of young people is determined mainly by what they read in novels—they will either stop loving and reproducing, or at least will stop going into their love affairs with those high expectations whose momentum is responsible for most of what actually manages to get done, in this wasteful world. But fortunately our censors are concerned only with suppressing reports of the pleasure of love, not its pains, so Mrs. Seymour is safe from their ministrations; as far as reticence of language and situation goes "Three Wives" might have been written in 1899.

* * *

There are in fact four wives in the book, as well as a couple of widows, several mistresses, and some husbands; indeed "Three Wives" might well have been called "Dreadful Husbands" but for the fact that a title with women in it sells better. It is a matter of taste whether you find Michael Ross or Theodore Warren the most dreadful husband in the book; their faults were opposite, they are the North and South Poles of marital dreadfulness. Yet where is the perfect husband who stands precisely astraddle of the Equator, with not a touch in him of Theo Warren or Mickey Ross? Stella Halsey fell in love with Mickey so hard she never could fall out; and Mickey, with his "genius for collecting the second-rate," his need of feminine adulation, nevertheless loved nobody but his wife, as he always assured her after each of his affairs. Mickey was constantly unfaithful but never wanted to be; Stella, after she saw through him, wanted to be but never was.

Stella's sister Tony was hard and modern; she didn't believe in love, even before she saw what it was doing to Stella; yet she discovered eventually "that marriage without some justification, some passionate, adequate reason, was unbearable and always would be; that nothing would make up, no amount of mental sympathy or human friendliness." Her husband discovered that too; Mrs. Seymour seems to think better of Tony than of any of her other characters yet she is candid enough to make it clear that Tony was a good deal of a hellcat. Whereas Stella, the outmoded sentimentalist—just modern enough to know that she is a sentimentalist and that nothing can be done to bridge the gap between facts and her illusions—is the most admirable person in the book.

There are other wives and husbands, bound like Ixion to their respective wheels—and then just to prove that Mrs. Seymour, like her characters, is human and imperfect, there are the extra-marital admirers of Tony and Stella, who alone among the figures of the story look like something painted in because the composition required them at that point. But this, perhaps, was shrewd insight. One needs the relief of these sentimentalized characters in a book where all the other people are too real for comfort.

A Virile Talent

THE SENTIMENTALISTS. By DALE COLLINS. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1927. $2.

Reviewed by AMY LOVEMAN

MR. COLLINS has a fresh and vigorous talent, a swing of perception and a robustness of outlook that will not be denied. "The Sentimentalists" is in many ways a brutal book, but its brutality is relieved by an abiding belief in the propulsive power of sentiment, and lies in an unvarnished portrayal of surface uglinesses and not in sordidness of fancy or feeling. An admirable descriptive ability piles up a succession of sharply defined and pregnant impressions and conveys intangible values as certainly as concrete ones. There are pages where Mr. Collins's narrative fairly races, and where the swift sentences project upon the consciousness of the reader the very smells and thickness of the seething Malayan air, the brooding darkness of the tropical night, the immense silence of the sea. Personalities stand out with as powerful vitality as background, taking on bulk as well as character. The coarse, sweating, inarticulate Captain, the unwashed baby whose limpness surprises the hulking man into the one great tenderness of his life, the bleached mate whose drabness serves as foil for his arrogant masculinity, the girl whose better self yields to his surprising discernment of her character—these as well as minor figures that enter into the story are vividly and convincingly portrayed.

Where Mr. Collins is weakest is in the coincidences that carry his story to its resolution. This tale of the domination of a man and a woman by their mutual devotion to a baby, and of the crystallization in them through its influence of the sentimentality which in the case of the man lay unsuspected beneath the ruthlessness of his nature and in the woman had survived the hazards of a completely unmoral life, cuts through its difficulties a little fortuitously at the end. Life rarely produces so neat a conjunction of circumstances as that by which the Captain is enabled to retain his infant the while its mother still possesses it, and the girl whose affection for it went down before greater love for a man is enabled to reconcile surrender to the latter with duty to the former. It is not the emotions of the characters that are unconvincing, but certain of the situations into which they are forced. The sentimentality of his personalities Mr. Collins always make plausible; by frankly attaching a label to them he cuts the ground from under any criticism of them on that score. They are sentimentalists as are Bret Harte's rough miners of Roaring Camp, and like them convincing in their softer emotions as in their grosser ones. His story is occasionally far-fetched, and towards the end too obviously manipulated, but it is strong, honest, and virile.

Royalties received by an author from the selling, leasing, or renting of an intellectual product do not come within the legal meaning of "earned income," and are therefore not entitled to the 25 per cent reduction allowed by the law on "earned income," according to a ruling by A. W. Gregg, general counsel of the Internal Revenue Bureau, just announced.

Authors' earnings, Mr. Gregg held, must be classified for tax purposes as "unearned income" and must bear the full burden of taxation.

Money derived in the form of salary from newspapers is "earned" and the 25 per cent reduction applies to it.

Right of Sanctuary

THE BRIGHT THRESHOLD. By JANET RAMSAY. New York: Longmans, Green & Co. 1927. $2.

Reviewed by Nathalie Sedgwick Colby
Author of "Black Stream"

SINCE "Ulysses" put the material world out of fashion, the Stream of Consciousness novel has become more and more fluid. Frequently its processes are inchoate, resolving into a mess of words, out of which the reader is left to fish the plot and set the scenery.

As a relief it is good to turn to Janet Ramsay's second novel, "The Bright Threshold," whose lucid and well chosen English is unobtrusive—imposing no burden on the reader. Miss Ramsay does all the work for us, and moves Natalie Parkhurst, her heroine, in beautiful gradations from the tragic episode of her life in Paris with her mother, an American prima donna, to her struggle some years later in New York. There, in the home of the gentle egoist Mrs. Henry Warner, "who turns unpleasant truths into pleasant fallacies, and of such strawless bricks builds her false Paradise," Natalie's fate is entwined with that of Barclay Hammond, a pseudo-artist in life as well as in music. The letting-things-slide policy of Barclay takes its toll of Natalie: "Can't you understand . . . there's such a thing as spiritual rape?" she cries in despair, explaining her intimacy with him to Murray Abbott, who alone comprehends her artist's nature with its quick sympathies and its necessity for an austere retreat.

There is a vein of poetry running through this book, essentializing the people for us, and we build them for ourselves on their exposed skeletons; it gilds the commonplace so that a walk through the street on a hot summer day becomes a hymeneal with all of life, and it lifts an evening concert at the Metropolitan Museum, which Natalie shares with Barclay, very nearly out of prose:

> When the symphony began, faces lifted—clay flowering under a bright shaft of sound. The music seemed to draw its loveliness from all form and color gathered here; harmony flowing from curves of Grecian marble; twisted melodies like arabesques in chrysoprase and jade; pauses with the stern calmness of a bronze Buddha squatting on his pedestal; wood wind phrases breathing the color from a case of ancient Chinese pottery—tones glazed with violet, apple-green, and plum.

This book can be read aloud with profit, for there is no snag or hitch from beginning to end, with such golden intricacy do the words blend aspects with significance. Parallel with the circumstance of Natalie's life goes the spiritual equivalent of her passionate soul, searching always for the integrity of the inner chamber of herself, over whose bright threshold she can only cross when illusion is left outside. There she must always be alone. And it is on this haunting note of eternal solitariness that the book closes.

The Albatross Afoot

MARCO MILLIONS. By EUGENE O'NEILL. New York: Boni & Liveright. 1927. $2.50.

Reviewed by MARY CASS CANFIELD

EUGENE O'NEILL exists in our theatre as a creative talent with some of the unconsciousness and even awkwardness which often accompanies the gestures of those whom Emerson calls "the self-moved, the absorbed." His blasting sincerity, his passion and understanding, expressed in high and tense dramatic form, must mark him as an artist who stands alone; behind his bitter poetry, his turmoil of feeling, his sense of the strife and search in living, we see a fire that perhaps cruelly consumes him but is at the same time a beacon light to those who watch. However, it is noticeable that his productions have been uneven, the fitful flame burning now high, now low. His dark absorption flows naturally toward the morbid and grotesque; and there are moments when his intensity scarcely avoids the ridiculous.

One is reminded of Baudelaire's symbolic poem "The Albatross." Here, the poet is pictured as akin to the great white bird, so beautiful in flight, so hampered and laughable when, once captured, he must tread the earth among men.

> Shelley, the star enchanted, stumbled when he walked.

The parable can apply to O'Neill. It is useless to expect from this urgent and single-minded talent that balance which we call taste or that careful sophistication which avoids excesses; useless to hope

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for urbanity, conformity, smiling and worldly-wise aloofness. To be earnest is, in the eyes of certain spectators, to be visible. But Eugene O'Neill has the courage of his crudity. If, sometimes, we are conscious of his lack of *savoir faire*, of the almost childish exaggeration and melodrama in his less successful efforts, this does not prevent our being genuinely moved and impressed by his high passages, by the pity and truth and fervor which animate such plays as "Beyond the Horizon," "Anna Christie," or "The Great God Brown," and place them definitely as the most important works ever produced by an American dramatist.

In his most recently published play, "Marco Millions," which is to reach the stage only this coming autumn, O'Neill has turned frankly, and I think unfortunately, to satire. For in spite of the imaginative power in the piece which is as natural to this author as breath, one emerges from reading "Marco Millions" with a feeling that this sort of thing is not at all O'Neill's affair. The stiletto is hardly his instrument. He has neither the instinct for form nor the civilized sharpness, much less the animal spirits or sense of mischief, which can carry off such an enterprise.

In this historical fantasy, Marco Polo is used as a symbol of American efficiency, cheerful materialism, and bumptious blindness to the finer spiritual values which are represented by those Orientals whom he encounters on his travels, and, according to himself, subjugates through his superior practical gifts. The many scenes gain their strength from a juxtaposition of the two so opposed points of view embodied in the bustling Venetian and the meditative Easterners.

* * *

There are some lovely and poignant lines placed in the mouths of those who survey with mingled sadness and amusement Marco's increasing degeneration of character. There is, too, the tragedy of Princess Kukachin's love for Polo, the fatal attraction which his physical presence, his vigor and confidence exercise over her, and her gradual despairing recognition of the irremediable shallowness and obtuseness of his soul. There is the well expressed wisdom and irony of Kubla Khan and his ancient counsellor, Chu Yin, playing like so many unnoticed shafts of lightning around Marco's serene egotism and gluttonous ambition. There are scenes of real comedy and others hushed and sharp with unshed tears. There is, from Mr. O'Neill, much ability and fancy, picturesque theatricalism, and a deft use of the new expressionistic methods which should add appreciably to the play's effect when it comes to the boards.

Nevertheless, it is an unescapable fact that, in the end, "Marco Millions" seems laborious, repetitious, unwieldy, and—gravest fault of all—obvious. Marco's characteristics, their contrast with the philosophic elevation of the Chinese mentality, are too often, too plainly insisted upon. Criticism is underscored where it should be barely brushed in. Where airy comedy should dance, tickle, divert us, we are disturbed and assaulted by violent farce. A giant is handling the caricaturist's caustic needle and blunting the point with his force.

* * *

There is, too, a hybrid mixture of manners and moods, varying from slangy realism to delicate poetry, which detracts from the unity of the play. There are several scenes which seem slurred, hurried over, insufficiently pondered and realized. Mr. O'Neill is embarrassed, one feels, by the task which he has set himself. He should have left the picturing of Babbitts to Sinclair Lewis; he should not have allowed his resentment against modern conditions in America to run away with him and sting him into this inharmonious attempt at revenge. His genius is of a different and infinitely higher order. It is or should be concerned with more simply tragic matter, with the pathos and comedy of humble everyday existence, with the problem of fate, with the importance and mystery of each and every human being's adventure through life. These things no one can feel more deeply nor express more finally than himself.

If one puts down "Marco Millions" with a sense of disappointment, this is because it fails in its own field. Satire, one sees, is supremely a conscious achievement, a formal exploit, depending for its artistic value on lightness of touch, taste, freakish humor, mingled detachment and sociability. It is not and never can be a medium for the solitary, the ardent, the wondering, and oblivious spirit.

The Bowling Green

(In Mr. Morley's absence general contributions will be run in place of his column.)

On Poe's Raven

(*Reactions of One of Our Still Younger Intellectuals*)

IN these days when critics come from the day-nursery, and reviewers from the kindergarten, twilight hours spent with children frequently afford an intellectual entertainment disproportioned to the expended time.

Thus far Claudia and I are agreed; when it comes to Criticism we both abhor the Academic. But, further, Claudia has become uncertain. She doubts the coldly critical, ruthlessly analytical impulse of the times.

Our daughter, Jane's, *milieu* is the critical, not the creative.

I am all for the Critical, for the undaunted audacity of the unsnubbed. I am for the Still Younger Intellectuals. But Claudia hesitates.

Colloquially speaking, Jane's speech is still dialectical; in criticism her language becomes as correct, as deliberate, and as crisp as shells laid in a row.

The other evening we were sitting in the alcove looking out upon the lawn; the sun was setting; dusk was in the oleanders. Claudia was reading from a book, a long-revered Victorian anthology, the text of which was interspersed with wood-cuts.

Coming upon a picture once supposed to illustrate Edgar Poe's "Raven," "Mudder," said Jane, "W'at's the matter wi' the gentleman?"

Claudia carelessly replied in a casual tone: "Oh, from his expression I should say that he had a severe headache."

"Hmmf! A very se-vere headache?"

"Yes."

"Not just an ord-i-na-ry headache?"

"No; it was not an ordinary headache; that I think, is certain."

"Read me that."

Claudia scented the approach of a critical situation, and sought to side-step it: "I don't think you will like it," she said quickly, "Or that you really want it."

"Well," said Jane, "You read it."

Claudia forthwith read:

Once, upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary,
Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore,—
While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping,
As of someone gently rapping, rapping at my chamber door.

"Mudder!" said a panting voice, "W'at was it?"

"A raven, honey. Do you know what a raven is?"

"Oh, yes . . . first cousin to the crows."

"Well, this was a raven."

"A nice raven? A good raven?" anxiously.

"Er-r-r-, ye-es; it was a good raven, a very good raven, a good, poetical raven; it enabled this gentleman to write this poem. Had it not been for the raven, perhaps he might never have written the poem."

"Do ravens make persons write poems?"

Fell a pause. Claudia thought of all our friends who write poetry but do not keep ravens; so hesitated a moment. A small, insistent finger was laid upon the text.

"Er-r, not always; sometimes it seems so."

"Did this one?"

"Apparently this one did."

"Um-hm! Well, go on reading; I want more. I'd like to know about ravens. Mr. Hervey Allen had rabbits under his house; but they were not his rabbits; so they only made him swear. He once said, 'Damn those rabbits . . . they have made me drop a line!' Rabbits are no help. Go on."

"Ah, distinctly I remember it was in the bleak December."

"What's a 'bleak December?' "

"December? Oh, December is one of the months of the year. There are twelve months: this is April; your birthday comes in May; Jack was born in January; Christmas comes in December; you were at grandma's in December."

"What is 'bleak?' "

"Oh, very chilly and uncomfortable."

"Humph! He could sit by the fire!"

"He *was* sitting by the fire. The verse goes on to say"

"And each separate, dying ember" . . .

"What is a 'dying ember?' "

"An ember? A little red-hot coal of fire beginning to go out."

"Hadn't he a blower? There's one in the nursery."

"The gentleman was feeling too badly to think of getting the blower."

"Someone might have fetched it. Couldn't he call the maid?"

"You forget, dear; it was midnight; and there wasn't any maid."

"Oh, yes; I see. Go on."

And each separate, dying ember wrought its ghost upon the floor.

"'Ghost!' A real ghost?" There were signs of suppressed emotion, and a look out on the lawn.

"Oh, no; not a real ghost; only the wavering light from the fireplace."

"It was the ghost knocked on the door!"

"Oh, no. There were no ghosts. That was the raven."

"Oh-h-h-h! Hm-m-m-m-m! Very well . . . go on."

Claudia went on. I never knew anyone just like Claudia; she always does go on . . . on to the bitter end:

Eagerly I wished the morrow;—vainly I had tried to borrow
From my books surcease of sorrow . . .

"Wait! Where was it he tried to borrow that . . . that . . . thing he tried to borrow?"

"It was from his books he tried to borrow consolation. It was peace of mind, and comfort he desired."

"Oh!"

And the silken, sad, uncertain rustling of each purple curtain . . .

"*I* should have used the curtain for a comfort!"

"It was not that sort of 'comfort' the poor poet sought, dear; he wanted comfort for his soul; neither silk nor woolen fabric can comfort a troubled soul."

"They can't?"

"No, dearie" . . . Claudie has her pious side . . . "Only heaven's infinite mercy can."

"Then whyn't he pray?"

Claudia coughed heavily, and hurriedly resumed the text:

The silken, sad, uncertain rustling of each purple curtain
Thrilled me,—filled me with fantastic terrors . . .

"Hmf! 'Twasn't his soul troubled him. He was scared."

Claudia hurried on with patently oblivious ear:

Hesitating then longer . . .
. . . . here I opened wide the door!

"Oo-oo-oo-oo! WHAT?" a whispering gasp.

Darkness there, and nothing more!

"Oh, shucks!"

Deep into that darkness peering, long I stood there, wondering, fearing,
Doubting, dreaming dreams no mortal ever dared to dream before;
But the silence was unbroken, and the stillness gave no token,
And the only word there spoken . . .

"WHERE'S THAT RAVEN?"

"We haven't reached the raven."

"We haven't?"

"No; not yet."

"Oh-h! Mm-mm-mm-mm! Well, go on!" with hesitating circumspection.

Back into my chamber turning, all my soul within me burning,
Soon again I heard a tapping somewhat louder than before.
"Surely," I said, "surely that is something at my window lattice" . . .

At that Jane jumped, and withdrew herself from her confident attitude by the window.

"Let me see, then, what thereat is, and this mystery explore!"

Jane stared into the gathering dusk. Twilight had crept between the houses; and against the dimming sky the trees loomed prodigious and black.

"G-g-go on," she said.

"G-g-go on," she said. She possesses in a marked degree her mother's immense curiosity, and my courage.

Open here I flung the shutter . . .

"Wait! Wait a minute! There's something walking on the lawn!" A death-like silence followed, a breathless moment: "No; it aren't nothing. Go on," she said with great but partly feigned disdain.

When with many a flirt and flutter
In there stepped . . .

"No, mother! No, NO!" cried Jane, with great decision. "There needn't nothing come a-steppin' in! The gentleman can go to bed. He is sit up late enough!"

So much for Edgar Allan Poe and the immaculate conception of an inaudible bird.

JOHN BENNETT.

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Books of Special Interest

British Government

THE MECHANISM OF THE MODERN STATE: A Treatise on the Science and the Art of Government. By SIR JOHN A. R. MARRIOTT. New York: Oxford University Press. 1927. 2 vols. $15.

Reviewed by WILLIAM BENNETT MUNRO
Harvard University

THE title of this work is misleading. It is not a treatise on the science and art of government in general, but on British methods of government at home and abroad. True enough, there are some chapters on the operations of government in the United States, in France, and in Switzerland; but they merely skim the surface and have been inserted for the purpose of bringing into bolder relief the outstanding (and, of course, superior) features of British polity.

Nevertheless these two volumes cover a lot of ground—with a prelude on the history of political thought, a sketch of Greek democracy, several long chapters on the governments of the various British dominions, and an exhaustive inventory of Great Britain's administrative mechanism, all interlarded with rather prolix discussions of the way in which these things originated. We are told in the preface that the work embodies the fruits of the author's long experience, both as a teacher and a parliamentarian; and there is no gainsaying the fact that it does contain a great mass of material. Unhappily, however, this material is presented in such disjointed fashion, and the narrative is so badly befogged by the inclusion of minor details, that the reader who ploughs his way through these twelve hundred pages must be prepared to do some intellectual sweating in the process.

Take the chapters on the British executive, for example. In their relentless enumeration of all the wheels and cogs and gears which make up the machinery of government in the sceptered isle, these chapters are about as interesting as the catalogue of ships in Homer. One sorely misses here the discrimination which characterizes the writings of Lowell on English government and the lightness of touch that marked the work of Bryce.

As respects the government of the United States, from which illustrations are freely drawn for purposes of contrast, the author displays no familiarity with the specialized literature of the subject, although a curious selection from it is included in his bibliography—apparently on the principle that all American books are created free and equal. His grasp of American political methods is precisely what one might expect to gain by dipping gingerly into a few textbooks. As a rule he gets the husk and misses the kernel. All in all, the work is disappointing, when one considers the author's opportunities, and affords a rather impressive illustration of the extent to which the standards of productive scholarship at Oxford have slumped since the war.

Debatable Ground

BESSARABIA. By CHARLES UPSON CLARK. New York: Dodd, Mead & Co. 1927. $3.50.

Reviewed by HAMILTON FISH ARMSTRONG
Associate Editor, *Foreign Affairs*

RUMANIA, surrounded by six neighbors of whom five are Slavic, will have to pursue a far-sighted and sober policy if she is to escape becoming either an "oppressed minority" in some Slavic constellation or (a hardly more reassuring prospect) the spearhead of a Magyar-Latin coalition over which she could not hope to exercise effective control and which would tend to offer her up as a vicarious sacrifice in a crusade against the barbarians out of Asia.

For this reason, and because such violent national feelings are involved, Rumania's most vulnerable point today is Bessarabia, the former Russian province which she absorbed after the war. The act received the approval of the Powers, but Moscow has not ceased to denounce it and promise revenge. In this matter, moreover, the pronouncements of Moscow do not express the views of the Soviet Government only, but those of any Russian Government which we can conceive of as coming to power in the future. The actual situation in Bessarabia, then, is important not merely for Rumania but for Europe as a whole.

A careful study of Bessarabia, historically, ethnically, politically, and economically, was therefore much needed. Professor Charles Upson Clark has been in Rumania on numerous occasions since the war, speaks the language, and last year made a special tour of investigation in Bessarabia in order to test his theories by the facts. His conclusions are favorable to Rumania, though he admits that in many respects the Rumanian administration in the annexed territories has fallen short of what it should be.

Most impartial students, and among them not a few Russians, admit that from the point of view of race the Rumanians have the best of the argument over Bessarabia. Russia's historical claim also seems less satisfactory than Rumania's. (The term "satisfactory" is used relatively; no ethnic or historical claim can be thoroughly satisfactory in an area of such mixed population and with such a kaleidoscopic history.) The economic problem, because of the province's former commercial ties with Odessa and because of the post-war dislocation of the whole European economy, is harder for Mr. Clark to present in a way that will be altogether acceptable to his Rumanian friends.

Among other matters with which Mr. Clark deals, particular mention ought to be made of the chapter on Christian Rakovsky, now Soviet Ambassador in London, whose career has been interwoven throughout with events in the Balkans; also of the interesting account of the so-called "Tartar-Bunar Revolution" of 1924, which was so much discussed in the European press following the protests of Romain Rolland and others over the way in which the trial of the several hundred conspirators was conducted.

Mr. Clark's book obviously represents a sincere effort to make intelligible a special European problem that at almost any moment may assume formidable proportions. As such it is sure of a warm welcome.

The South Seas

BYWAYS OF THE TROPIC SEAS. By HERMANN NORDEN. Philadelphia: Macrae Smith Co. 1927.

Reviewed by ARCHIE BINNS

SO much nonsense has been written about the South Seas that many of the reading population of the islands are skeptical of the ability of writers to rely on facts even when they are interesting. Certainly the most popular South Sea confections have had a colicky effect on those who ought to know. The portion of "Byways of the Tropic Seas" which deals with the islands of romance should be refreshing to those who have suffered. Not caring to rely wholy on his own ephemeral experience with the islands, this reviewer tried out the book on a South Sea trader, who began it bristling with suspicion and ended by pronouncing Mr. Norden a truthful and straightforward gentleman, with observation and understanding.

"Byways of the Tropic Seas" has the advantage of modesty and good judgment; it does not attempt to cover far-flung islands or pump up enthusiasm for later-day carnivals. The author stops at Tahiti about as long as a nature lover would at Coney Island—just long enough, in fact, to misspell Charmian London's name—and from there he sails for the savage and unhealthy islands of Malaita and Guadalcanar as mate of a recruiting ketch, which he presently charters. In his treatment of the Solomons, there are flashes of beauty and spots of romance that inevitably appear pathetic and minute against the sombre background of islands that are the hunting ground of disease and death in a multitude of forms. The author does not attempt to penetrate beyond the coast of the Solomons—the only white man who ever crossed Guadalcanar alive, he remarks, did it at night, running, with a Bible under his arm.

At the outset, Mr. Norden explains that his real objective was the island of Bala, in the Malay Archipelago, and it is here that he is at his happiest, both in subject and treatment. Bala, it would appear, is perhaps the last island where a splendid and artistic people has escaped the juggernaut of our civilization. The author approaches this fortunate race with the fine mixture of admiration and sympathy that comes from a recognition of the qualities which make such a people happy and beautiful—and the inescapable apprehension born of the consciousness of how such peoples have been served in the past.

More Contemporary Americans

By PERCY HOLMES BOYNTON

The case for American culture, badly battered by commentators at home and abroad, well deserves restatement and defense. Reviewing the evidence, Mr. Boynton is able to take an optimistic view of American life and letters.

Considering certain spokesmen—Melville, Bierce, Hearn, Hergesheimer, Anderson, Lewis—he concludes that certain fine inherited traditions are surviving, that the public is not oblivious of them, and that a new public is developing with a taste distinctly its own.

Mr. Boynton writes with an unfaltering style and unerring taste. His interpretation of the current situation is based on sound, discriminating judgment.

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Books of Special Interest

The Frontier Factor

THE FRONTIER IN AMERICAN LITERATURE. By LUCY LOCKWOOD HAZARD. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co. 1927. $2.75.

Reviewed by JAY B. HUBBELL
Southern Methodist University

IN the American field of research the historian has put the literary historian to shame. Up to 1924 or 1925 students of American literature persistently neglected the work done in American history by Frederick J. Turner, Frederic L. Paxson, and numerous others, who have practically revolutionized the study of American history since 1893. In a memorable paper on "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," read in that year before the American Historical Association, Turner pointed out the tremendous importance of the frontier factor. Since that time the historians have worked the frontier field so thoroughly that in 1924 Professor Paxson could publish a "History of the American Frontier," which seems almost final. Yet it was thirty years after Turner's paper before any one made an application of his point of view to American literature. As one looks back now, one wonders why it was necessary to wait for Turner to show us the literary importance of the frontier. It is all implicit in Whitman's "Pioneers! O Pioneers!" and in Emerson's famous sentence, "Europe extends to the Alleghanies; America is beyond." Surely, in the field of American literature, we need a more imaginative scholarship.

Mrs. Hazard has undertaken to show that the frontier is as important a factor in our literature as in our history—to show that it is the frontier influence which has transformed a minor branch of English literature into a genuinely American literature. To quote from Mrs. Hazard's introduction:

> An attempt has been made to study the use of the frontier by those writers who, like Cooper and Bret Harte, have deliberately chosen it as a setting; an attempt has also been made toward the analysis of a much more difficult and much more important problem: the indirect but powerful influence of the frontier in shaping the conditions of American life and the resultant American philosophies.

Mrs. Hazard's survey of that part of American literature which deals directly with frontier life is better than her interpretation of the indirect frontier influence. Even here, however, her work suffers from a comparison with Miss Dorothy Dondore's recently published "The Prairie," which treats a limited frontier field. Mrs. Hazard's chapter titles indicate the material she includes: "The Puritan Frontier," "The Southern Frontier," "Hunter and Trapper," "The Golden Age of Transcendentalism," "The Frontier of '49," "The Gilded Age of Industrial Pioneering," "The Frontier and the Nester," "The Coming Age of Spiritual Pioneering." A brief survey of so wide and so long neglected a field is almost bound to be inaccurate in many details. In her discussion of the Southern frontier Mrs. Hazard omits entirely the Southern humorists, forerunners of Mark Twain, such as Baldwin and Longstreet. Apparently, she has not read John D. Wade's admirable biography of Judge Longstreet nor Miss Tandy's study of the crackerbox philosophers. She gives too much space to the Southern planter—who is hardly a frontier figure—and she makes the mistake of judging him largely by the romantic fiction which has been written about him. In nearly every chapter she makes a point of including some well-known writer of today, like James Branch Cabell. By so doing, she has made a more readable—and a more marketable—book; but would it not have been better to give the space to writers in whom the frontier influence is really important?

Mrs. Hazard's discussion of the indirect influence of the frontier is, as I have indicated, less satisfactory than her survey of the literature which deals directly with the frontier; but she is undoubtedly right in thinking the indirect influence important. Her discussions of "industrial pioneering" and—even more—of "spiritual pioneering" suggest a loose understanding of the term "frontier." Certain figures whom she stresses, like Andrew Carnegie and Theodore Dreiser, have as little connection with the frontier as Poe or Carlyle, who was certainly a "spiritual pioneer"—even though he never saw America.

Mrs. Hazard has nothing to say of the American Revolution, which—itself largely the result of frontier influences—created the demand for a national culture and a national literature. The search for a native literary tradition, which perhaps had its origin here, resulted finally in the discovery of it in the frontier itself. American literature became American largely through the sublimation of the frontier spirit. Mrs. Hazard does not attempt to show how from the West wave after wave of influences—literary as well as political—swept eastward over the Alleghanies, all tending to make our literature more national. American literature is the result of the interplay of complex and changing cultural and historical influences—sectional, national, and foreign. Properly to appraise the frontier influence, one needs to understand thoroughly the part played by all the other influences. "The Frontier in American Literature" plays up the one influence to the neglect of the others. Mrs. Hazard's discussion of Transcendentalism, for example, while valuable as a corrective to the conventional view, makes too much of the frontier influence and not enough of other influences, local and European.

In view of the fact that "The Frontier in American Literature" is a pioneer book, intended to open up a vast and little explored field, it is obviously unfair to compare it with Paxson's "History of the American Frontier." Mrs. Hazard deserves praise for discerning and pointing out the significance of what is perhaps the largest single factor in our literary history. Teachers of American literature will find the book useful as a corrective to the traditional approach to our literary history.

Mrs. Hazard has, perhaps unintentionally, left upon her readers the impression that no one before her had ever pointed out the importance of the frontier element in American literature. At least three persons have emphasized it before in publications which, one imagines, she must have seen. For example, Professor Norman Foerster has twice emphasized the importance of the frontier influence: first, in the preface to his "American Poetry and Prose" and, again, in an illuminating article on "American Literature" originally published in *The Saturday Review of Literature* for April 3, 1926, and since widely distributed in pamphlet form. Mrs. Hazard indirectly quotes from both the preface and the article, but nowhere does she suggest that her point of view had ever been anticipated by any one else.

JUST PUBLISHED

Men of Destiny

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Foreign Literature

German Dramatists

BONAPARTE. By FRITZ VON UNRUH. Frankfurt: Frankfurter Societäts-Druckerei. 1927.

DEMETRIUS; HAUPT- UND STAATSAKTION. By ALEXANDER LERNET-HOLENIA. Berlin: S. Fischer. 1927.

OESTERREICHISCHE KOMOEDIE. By ALEXANDER LERNET-HOLENIA. Berlin: S. Fischer. 1927.

Reviewed by A. W. G. RANDALL

HERE, among recently-published German plays, are two tragedies and two comedies, worthy respresentatives of tendencies in the younger German drama where, to judge from reports from the majority of German theatres, serious talent has to contend with heavy foreign importation or with farcical comedies of no permanent interest. Fritz von Unruh is a very serious dramatist indeed. He has a mission, one feels. That is no drawback if there is sufficient dramatic talent to support it, and not only his pre-war plays, "Offiziere"—one may recall that von Unruh was an officer in a crack Uhlan-regiment—and his historical play, "Louis Ferdinand, Prinz von Preussen," showed distinct gifts for the theatre, but the plays in which, subsequently, he gave dramatic expression to his "mission," the tragedy, "Ein Geschlecht," its successor, "Platz," and the play "Stürme," were of an earnestness which did not degenerate into boredom and of an eloquence which did not too often soar into mere verbosity.

He is essentially an anti-militarist, a sincere opponent of force and tyranny, and it is in this spirit that he has approached the figure of the First Consul. It is Bonaparte, not Napoleon, who is the central figure of this play. He is shown on the way to seizing the imperial power, and the ruthlessless of his character is brought out by the pathetic sub-plot of the capture and condemnation of the young Duc d'Enghien. The heroic melodramatic note so loudly sounded by Rostand is absent, but the German playwright wrings all the pity from the story, and makes the surrounding atmosphere vivid by his portrayal of the sensuality of Josephine, the cynicism of Talleyrand, the disillusioned republicanism of Carnot. The closing scene rises to full historical melodrama with Napoleon's sudden encounter with the mother of the Duc d'Enghien and the cry of Savary, "Tu es Augustus in æternum," as the laurel is presented to the Emperor. The dramatist has escaped from the expressionist abstractions of his earlier work and has created a drama on which historical, concrete realities—whatever may be our criticism of the interpretation he has given them—have assisted to confer force and vitality.

Alexander Lernet-Holenia is a new name in German drama. Born about forty years ago of Austrian and French descent, he has achieved a notable reputation in the past twelve months or so, and was awarded the Kleist Prize for 1926 for his dramatic work in general. In his tragedy of the "false Demetrius" he measures himself with Schiller, Hebbel, and Pushkin, but escapes the suggestion of being a copyist by a new conception of the central figure. With the three earlier writers the rival to Boris Godunov is a false claimant, at least their attitude to him is conditioned by this belief. But with Herr Lernet-Holenia's play we feel that he, and still more the hero himself, are in doubt. Demetrius plays the part given him in the torturing ignorance of his real identity. It suggests a comparison with Pirandello's Henry IV., but the resemblance is only superficial. This is no play of psycho-analytical experiment, but the stark reality of a man acting a rôle in which he cannot entirely believe.

Herr Lernet-Holenia has not attempted to "prove" anything with this historical tragedy, and for this reason one cannot but feel that it is a more effective achievement than Herr von Unruh's dramatic sermon against imperial tyranny.

The Austrian dramatist's next play is of an entirely different kind. It is a study in decadent Austrian society. An old man has forced his daughter into vice for financial reasons. He is, however, anxious to conceal the past and marry her to an aristocrat. He contrives an entry into high society, but one of the guests has recognized the woman who accompanies him and is his accomplice in the plot. With technical skill of a high order the dramatist works up the ensuing scandal, the noise and heated discussion, the undisguised brutality of the language—it is this more than anything else that marks him off from Arthur Schnitzler, who has more than once dealt with the same *milieu*—are of a remarkable stage-effectiveness, and eventually the dénouement comes with the promise of another young man to accept the girl as his "Verlobte," his betrothed. The whole subject is repulsive, and the dramatist has made no attempt to gloss it over. Rather he heightens his effects by the interjections of the quiet old manservant Johann. For a proper appreciation of the play as a whole, however, one must project it in one's mind's eye, on to the stage. "Demetrius" is interesting enough to read; this "comedy" should be seen and heard.

Herr Kornfeld, like Fritz von Unruh, has departed from the "expressionist" preoccupations of his earlier plays, and in "Kilian" has written a straightforward comedy, where long discussion is not so much in evidence as in his earlier comedy, "Der Ewige Traum," which appeared in 1922. The subject of his new play is lighter than Herr Lernet-Holenia's. Kilian is a simple bookbinder who arrives at the house of one of those aristocratic ladies who dabble in the Higher Thought. He is taken for the "mystic" and "philosopher" Natterer, whom the assembled company were expecting, and he willingly accepts the part thrust upon him. Rolling out mystical commonplaces, he finds, is not more difficult than binding books, and is much better paid. And so the action proceeds, with a number of subordinate scenes, flirtations, a trial séance, in which the yellow rose of the subtitle plays a part, until the real mystic arrives. The scene between him and Kilian is excellent. He threatens exposure, upon which the humble bookbinder points out that this will merely expose himself. And so he retires discomfited, leaving the adherents of the deeper self and the higher consciousness none the wiser. The story is perhaps a little thin to spread over so long a play, but the amusing moments are worth waiting for.

German Addresses

DEUTSCHE DENKREDEN. Besorgt von RUDOLF BORCHARDT. Munich: Verlag der Bremer Presse. 1927.

THIS is an anthology of an original and welcome kind. Germany is not usually associated in one's mind with oratorical literature. Adam Müller, over a century ago, pointed out this gap in the German national genius, and gave the reason for it. "German thought," he said, "goes farther than German speech," and the German people as a whole had been too much preoccupied with their political and intellectual struggles to give the necessary attention to the elaboration of oratory.

The editor of this anthology, who might well have recalled these observations of Adam Müller, makes substantially the same remarks, but goes further in his examination of the causes. Germany, he says in effect, has lagged behind France, Italy, and England in the production of oratorical literature because this art can only be brought to perfection, as in Bossuet, for example, or Burke, by a race of unified religious tradition or consistent democratic sentiment. It was Germany's tragic fate to lack both and so the fine flights of oratory, product of a sense of solidarity vitally experienced (*eine lebendige empfundene Gemeinschaft*) have been less in evidence there than in other European countries.

This does not mean that the material for the oratory was lacking. The sentiment was there; it was the capability of expressing it that was wanting. Yet there have been exceptions, brilliant exceptions, nearly all classifiable in one category, the category of appreciation for intellectual or scientific achievement. The German is stirred to real eloquence by the contemplation of greatness in his fellow-countrymen, and all the *Denkreden* printed by Herr Borchardt in this excellently-produced volume are eulogies of the gifts of others. And not mere eulogy. Generally there is a solid foundation of criticism, as Herder on Lessing and Winckelmann, Goethe on Wieland. Herbert on Kant is a classic contribution to Kantian literature, and August Boeckh on Steffens, Schelling, and Alexander von Humboldt, is an impressive example of the characteristic German oratorical inspiration on which Herr Borchardt lays such emphasis. For a grace and a lightness which is generally absent from these speeches we turn to Jakob Grimm who in his eulogy on Schiller evokes the picture of Petrarch visiting the Rhine, and in his commemoration of his brother sets up a monument of remarkable pathos, dignity, and beauty.

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The New Books

The books listed by title only in the classified list below are noted here as received. Many of them will be reviewed later.

Belles Lettres

MORE CONTEMPORARY AMERICANS. By *Percy Holmes Boynton.* University of Chicago Press. $2.50.

EXPERIENCES OF A LITERARY MAN. By *Stephen Gwynn.* Holt. $4.

A HISTORY OF ANCIENT GREEK LITERATURE. By *Gilbert Murray.* Appleton. $1.

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF BLAKE. By *Max Plowman.* Dutton. $2.50.

Biography

A NEW ENGLAND BOYHOOD. By EDWARD EVERETT HALE. Little, Brown. 1927. $3.

This delightful record of the boyhood of a youth and the youth of a town is one that should be in the library of the mature as well as the young. It is a mellow yet sprightly chronicle, portraying the Boston of the early part of the nineteenth century and the life of a lad whose lines fell in pleasant places and among cultured people. This new edition provides a charming dress for a noteworthy work.

THOMAS CARLYLE. By *Mary Agnes Hamilton.* Holt. $2.50.

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN. By *Harvey Grace.* Harpers.

ANNIE OAKLEY. By *Courtney Ryley Cooper.* Duffield. $2.50 net.

A CHILDHOOD IN BRITTANY EIGHTY YEARS AGO. Houghton Mifflin. $2.50.

THE BOOK OF FAMOUS QUEENS. By *Lydia Hoyt Farmer.* Crowell. $2.50 net.

HEROES OF THE AIR. By *Chelsea Fraser.* Crowell. $2 net.

CARDINAL POLE AND HIS EARLY FRIENDS. By *Cardinal Gasquet.* Harcourt, Brace. $2.

THE GREVILLE DIARY. Edited by *Philips Whitwell Wilson.* Doubleday, Page. 2 vols.

HORACE WALPOLE. By *Austin Dobson.* Revised by Paget Toynble. Oxford. $4.

LIVES. By *Isaak Walton.* Oxford. 80 cents.

SELECTED ENGLISH LETTERS. Arranged by *M. Duckett* and *H. Wragg.* Oxford. 80 cents.

LET'S GO. By *Louis Felix Ranlett.* Houghton Mifflin. $2.50.

Drama

STAGE COSTUMING. By AGNES BROOKS YOUNG. Macmillan. 1927. $2.50.

This book fills a vacant and important space in the working library of every active theater. Miss Young possesses a wealth of practical knowledge accumulated in the costume shop of the Cleveland Playhouse. In her well-ordered chapters she takes up clearly and concisely all matters that have a bearing on the complete theatrical costume such as execution, style, color, wearing, etc. This book correlates for the amateur all that he may have felt or observed about stage costuming.

THE ART OF PANTOMIME. By CHARLES AUBERT. Holt. 1927. $3.50.

Turn the pages of "The Art of Pantomime" quickly (like an illustrated moving picture book for children) and its two hundred illustrations of facial expressions and bodily gyrations will give a swift summary of all the emotions of which man is capable. It would have been far wiser to have left this book untranslated—as a classic for the French only. It is dull in style, lacking in any originality of material, and leaves no space for imagination—which must be the very heart of pantomime.

MINOR PROPHECIES. By LEE SIMONSON. Harcourt, Brace. 1927. $1.50.

Since his early experiments with the Theatre Guild, Lee Simonson has stood as one of the foremost scenic designers in our modern theatre. During these years by his close association with the theatre he has created in the essays that make up "Minor Prophecies" an esthetic philosophy on the particular fitness and appropriateness of art to the current life that produces it. Our modern life with its great luxuries, incessant work and play, tuned to new scientific discoveries and mechanical inventions, must create a fertile field for an unconscious growth of free artistic embellishment. And Mr. Simonson points out "Whenever pictorial art has achieved vitality, it has looked upon its work as a job, in the current American sense, and been animated by the specific purpose of housing and adorning human activity. The importance of 'fine' art has been its relevance as a craft to the habits of any epoch. Beauty is essentially a by-product, the record of that appropriateness, of relevance outlived." Reflecting the social and artistic revolutions consequent to the war the Minor Prophecies should rightly today fit as major keys for opening up new esthetic revaluations in our outword estimation and appreciation of what new and old art really is. Throughout, Mr. Simonson aims to encompass the variable forms of living with a glamorous background, and it is the glamor "that brings one back to life again, to one's own life." When these earlier essays were written they were prophecies. Today half of them are no longer prophecies but truths.

Fiction

THE THUNDERER. By E. BARRINGTON. Dodd, Mead. 1927. $2.50.

The lady known as E. Barrington (when she does not prefer to be known as L. Adams Beck or Louis Moresby), has novelized Napoleon. The thing has been done before, and better done, it may as well be admitted. Few previous attempts, however, have had audiences as great as "The Thunderer" is sure to command. Beginning with the thirteenth Vendémiaire, she sketches the Corsican's career in a brilliant but disconnected series of pictures. It is, of course, Napoleon the lover, rather than the general or statesman, on which Mrs. Beck concentrates. She takes some liberties with history, though far less freely than in "Glorious Apollo." Josephine suffers most from her imagination, and has surely never appeared of less consequence both as a woman and as Napoleon's wife. Whatever else may be laid up against the Creole,—and there is undoubtedly enough,—it can hardly be supposed that she was nothing more than a foolish little flirt.

Mrs. Beck's Josephine would never have escaped from Martinique, let alone become Napoleon's consort. Beyond the expected theatricality and a habit of becoming alarmingly portentous at the wrong moments, over tea-tables and in the boudoir for instance, her hero does not differ greatly from the accepted conception of the man. It is even possible to conceive of Herr Ludwig's Napoleon acting in his weaker

(*Continued on next page*)

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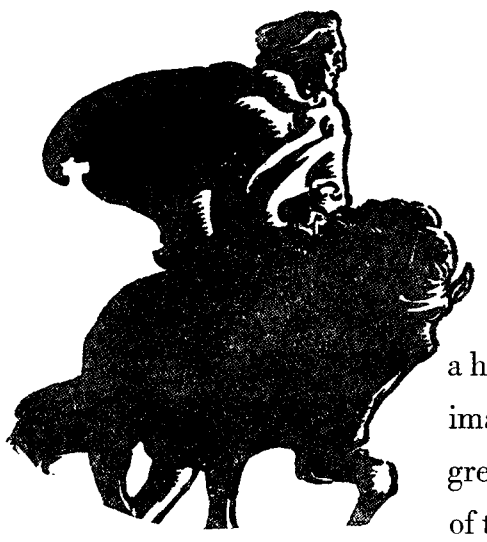

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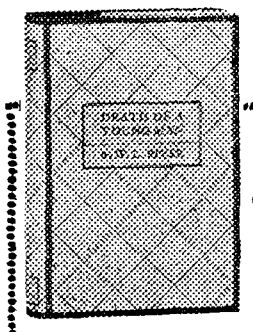

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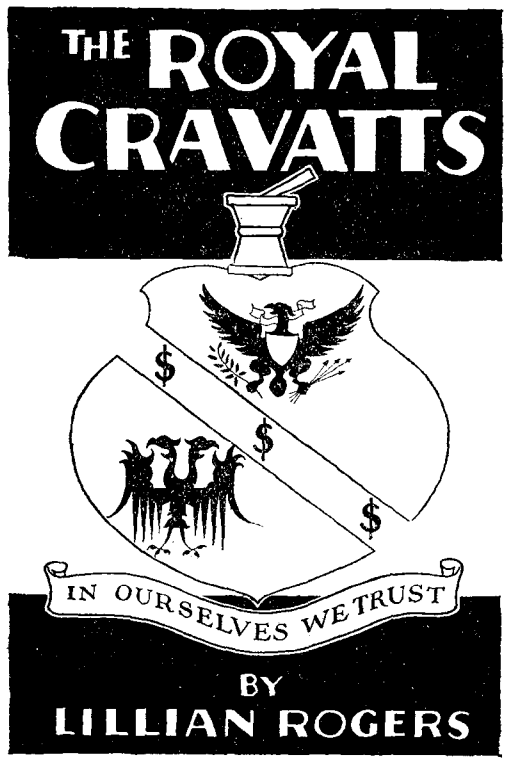

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The New Books

(*Continued from preceding page*)

Fiction

moments like Mrs. Beck's. Her book is built on familiar lines, and is as effective as usual, save that the abundance of material has caused her to produce a less well knit story. There are innumerable secondary characters who talk about nothing but Napoleon, to our greater enlightenment. There is never anything which might by the most charitable stretching of the imagination be called realism,—but perhaps that is not to be expected in novels about historical personages.

THE DEVIL OF PEI-LING. By HERBERT ASBURY. Macy-Masius. 1927. $2.

The particular devil with which Mr. Asbury (sometime chronicler of Methodism and of rural prostitution) occupies himself is decidedly enterprising. He oozes into the libraries of eminent gentlemen, exhibits a yellow light flecked with drops of blood, and materializes a spirit-noose for the breaking of necks. Bullets flatten themselves against his invisible hide. The only way in which the investigators can recognize his presence is by a smell as of errant corpses and by a "feeling" that something is not as it should be. As if this ghostly murderer were not enough, Mr. Asbury flirts with the problem of stigmatists, with the possibility of possession by demons, with diabolism, and many minor subtleties of spiritism. Now all this apparatus would be commendable if it were woven neatly into a decent plot. But trickiness dominates the story; all attempts to secure suavity are in vain. "The Devil of Pei-Ling" is not fair; too many mystery-making devices are never explained or mentioned a second time. Furthermore the innumerable props—idols, devil-worshippers, fiends in human form, odors, presences, cults—are hardly more than canvas stretched across a wooden framework.

THE WHITE AND GOLD LADY. By FOXHALL DAINGERFIELD. Doran. 1927. $2.

After an almost disastrous beginning, Mr. Daingerfield's novel gets under way as a good enough sentimental melodrama. There is never much skill in evidence, but the better passages are carried along by the vigor of their incidents. Shootings, seductions, and jealousies come along with enough speed to occupy our attention. Kentucky of the 1880's is the background for the story; among the personages are a young man whom the ladies like, a persecuted wife, the persecutor and his loves, and, finally, a picturesque citizenry of varied sympathies. Evidently Mr. Daingerfield is more at home with character than with the demands of plot-construction. In the atmosphere of the novel we find a distinct note of authenticity, with the endlessly flowing liquor, the semi-feudal civilization, the incessant hospitality. Altogether, "The White and Gold Lady" can be enjoyed in spite of all its crudities. But we are surely not hypercritical in wishing that certain errors in grammar and punctuation had been eliminated.

Miscellaneous

"HOSSES," A Collection of the Best Stories About Them. Compiled by CHARLES WRIGHT GRAY. Holt. 1927. $2.50.

The first duty of the reviewer of an anthology is to complain that the editor did not include certain favorites of his own, in this instance such stories as Kipling's "Maltese Cat" or John Taintor Foote's "The Look of Eagles," but no one volume could hope to include all of the best short stories about horses, and it must be admitted that Mr. Gray has made a very happy selection. Being an American anthology the editor has done wisely to include several stories with a strong Western flavor such as Zane Grav's "Lightening" and Victor Shawe's "Brown Outlaw." But he has also used discrimination in choosing from the work of Whyte-Melville, perhaps the greatest of sporting novelists, such a gem as "Your Hand-Writing Sir," an inimitable description of a horse deal. Also, the volume is enriched by Donn Byrne's charming story "A Story against Women." All told, "Hosses" represents several hours' real entertainment for the true horse lover.

BRIDLE WISE, A KEY TO BETTER HUNTERS—BETTER PONIES. By LT. COL. S. G. GOLDSCHMIDT. Scribners. 1927. $5.

Colonel Goldschmidt's book is probably the most thorough and painstaking volume on horsemanship which has been published for a long time. As a matter of fact the average youthful aspirant to polo and fox hunting honors is likely to find it too conscientious in the inclusion of technical detail. Even practiced horsemen are apt to be impatient of the "aids" and other details of the equine art which they use unconsciously but rarely consider so seriously. However, "Bridle Wise" is a valuable book to the beginner in horsemanship and contains a wealth of information for the experienced horseman as well.

Colonel Goldschmidt begins his book with an interesting and well considered chapter on the "Psychology of the Horse" and goes on to the development of young horses, bits and bitting, mounting and dismounting, the show ring, etc. The volume is principally concerned with the hunter and the polo pony, although there is very little matter in it which does not concern the ordinary saddle horse as well. In fact, Colonel Goldschmidt advocates a much more finished education for both the hunter and the polo pony than is usually considered necessary. Hence his title, "Bridle Wise." The illustrations by Lionel Edwards constitute a charming feature of a really valuable book.

HANDS UP! By *A. B. MacDonald.* Bobbs-Merrill. $3.

ON THE AIR. By *Paul D. Augsburg.* Appleton. $2.

COSTUME AND FASHION. By *Herbert Norris.* Dutton. $7.50.

ENGLISH SYNONYMS EXPLAINED. By *George Crabb.* New edition. Crowell. $2.50 net.

GRAY EAGLE. By *Herbert Ravenel Sass.* Minton, Balch. $2.50.

PROFITS IN BANK STOCKS. By *W. H. Woodward.* Macmillan. $1.50.

LARS PORSENA. By *Robert Graves.* Dutton. $1.

AMERICAN GAME SHOOTING. By *Paul A. Curtis, Jr.* Dutton. $4.

WHO AND WHAT. Edited by *Samuel Hopkins Adams.* Boni & Liveright. $1.50.

IS THAT SO! Edited by *Oliver D. Keep and Associates.* Boni & Liveright. $2.

THE SANCTITY OF LAW. By *John W. Burgess.* Ginn.

THE PUBLIC AND ITS PROBLEMS. By *John Dewey.* Holt. $2.50.

Travel

THE ROAD TO PARIS. By MICHAEL MONAHAN. New York: Frank-Maurice. 1927. $4.

"I shall not attempt in the course of this book," declaims Mr. Monahan, "to lift any of the hard-earned laurels of Baedeker and his ilk. I am not proposing to write a guidebook."

The words are unnecessary to those who have read his "Attic Dreamer" or his superb little brochure on Heine, for Mr. Monahan could not write a guidebook if he tried. His talents lie in another direction. As someone once said of him: "He has the gift that kings cannot give nor colleges grant—the gift of a beautiful style."

This gift of style, lightened by flashes of Celtic fancy and humor, carries even the fearsome reader through to the end of "The Road to Paris," a volume which might casually be described as a philosophic travelogue. As Mr. Monahan says in his prelude:

The road to Paris goes many a mile,
Ah, many a mile and away,
And back it runs to more genial suns
And the dawn of Youth's bright day,
When with Dumas père and his Mousquetaire
I rushed to my first Romance,
And by Fancy led, was swiftly sped
To the wondrous land of France.

So the reader is sped through the wondrous land of France, and down into Italy for thirteen chapters out of the forty-one. The publishers should have noted this excursion over the Alps on the jacket of this new, revised, and enlarged edition, as Mr. Monahan is as much at home in the precincts of Dante and Savonarola as he is in the Paris of Renan or Marie Antoinette.

OLD LONDON. By GERTRUDE BURFORD RAWLINGS. Little, Brown. 1927. $4.

"Without undertaking to tell anything that is new, or everything that is old, a Waywiser invites you to a ramble from Old London Bridge to Westminster." So writes Miss Rawlings in her foreword, and if you accept her invitation, you are in for a companionable stroll with a pleasant and well-informed guide. She has chosen a series of excellent old prints, to illustrate her text, and has made her volume equally enjoyable to those who know London, and to those who would like to.

MY LADY OF THE INDIAN PURDAH. By *Elizabeth Cooper.* Stokes. $2.50.

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The Reader's Guide

Conducted by MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

Inquiries in regard to the selection of books and questions of like nature should be addressed to MRS. BECKER, c/o *The Saturday Review.*

L. B. C., Montrose, N. Y., is planning a tour of the château district next Spring, to drive through France from Cherbourg to Italy via the Riviera, and as she has found the Guide useful in outfitting previous expeditions of this nature, asks for advice on preliminary reading.

FIRST the books especially for motorists: R. R. Gordon-Barrett's "Motoring in France" (Brentano), deals with the choice of a car and its equipment, costs, routes, and the like, and includes a descriptive list of towns and historic villages, with notes. Elizabeth Shackleton's "Touring Through France" (Penn), is a large book with many pictures, describing the route from Cherbourg to Marseilles and from Dijon to Biarritz, from personal experience. "Motor Rambles Through France," by F. C. Rimington (Houghton Mifflin), describes a tour from Monte Carlo to Dieppe and from Boulogne to Nice, with especial attention to history and architecture. "France from Sea to Sea," by Arthur Stanley Riggs (McBride), is a good general survey often used in getting the lay of the land from this side of the ocean. Edith Wharton's "Motor Flight Through France" (Scribners), a classic of automobile literature, would be especially useful to this tourist, for it includes the château country. For this purpose especially there is Frances M. Gostling's "The Lure of French Châteaux" (McBride), with historical information and legends, and "The Spell of the Heart of France," by André Hallays (Page), describing not only the châteaux near Paris but the towns and villages in this region; this is a most readable book. Mrs. King Waddington's "Château and Country Life in France," a famous set of reminiscences, is now published only in England (Murray 10/6) but no doubt could be found in public libraries. Captain Leslie Richardson's "Motor Cruising in France" (Houghton Mifflin), goes from Brittany to the Riviera, and for the latter region there is a special literature of travel, including "The French and Italian Rivieras," by Helena Waters (Houghton Mifflin), which is intended especially for motorists, "Along the Rivieras of France and Italy," by Gordon Home (Dutton), a sumptuous book with sixteen color plates, and "The French Riviera," by Devoluy and Borel (Medici Society), to which I call attention in particular because it is one of the Medici Picture Guides, and may introduce a prospective traveler to this useful and inexpensive series. It is inexpensive considering the great number of unusually clear and well reproduced photographic views with which the text is embellished. A new book that will be valuable for this tour is Capt. Richardson's "Brittany and the Loire" (Dodd, Mead), although this time he takes his journey with the aid of a little boat, exploring the coast towns around Nantes and the course of the Loire.

Though this is a motor tour for which I am offering these suggestions, I cannot speak of boats and France without reminding readers of Herbert Adams Gibbons's "Ports of France" (Century), a grateful and gratifying record of explorations around the seacoast towns, some of them ultra-fashionable, some grass-grown and forgotten. Nor should I omit the fine volume of "French Cathedrals" (Century), with text by Elizabeth Robins Pennell and the priceless illustrations of Joseph Pennell, nor a book of leisurely wanderings in "The Lost Kingdom of Burgundy" (Century), by Robert J. Casey, who wrote the only book of travels in Luxembourg that I know, nor an unusual guide for a special and fascinating purpose, Alice Van Leer Carrick's "Collector's Luck in France" (Little, Brown). This is the time of year when prospective travelers write to me for advice; they almost always apologize for beginning so far ahead—but the time to read travel books is either far ahead of travel or after one has returned, so this department will no doubt feature this sort of book for some weeks to come.

L. B., Canton, O., is anxious to recover the name of a book of essays once owned, which he desires to reorder.

ONE of the essays was on Kipling, and in it the statement was made: "A mask is a dangerous thing to wear—a little unexpected pressure and it may permanently mold the features beneath." Another essay was on Shaw. I don't recognize it: does any adviser of this department? *M. A. B., Chicago Tribune,* adds to the collection of stories to tell to children from four to ten the two volumes of "Chimney Corner Stories" and "Chimney Corner Fairy Tales," compiled by Veronica Hutchinson, illustrated by Lois Lenski, and published by Minton, Balch; the compiler is a very successful children's librarian and story-teller.

I. N. Y., New York City, asks if there is a really modern book for the study of Browning, preferably with "a bibliography that would save the reader's time by having a word or two of explanation."

"ONE Word More on Robert Browning," by Dr. F. T. Russell, lately published by the Stanford University Press, California, is a collection of spirited and scholarly essays whose connecting links make them an excellent guide-book for the intelligent reading and study of Browning. The bibliography attached to this book would in itself make it indispensable to the student.

D. C. W., Cleveland, O., has found Joyce's "Ulysses," Virginia Woolf's "To the Lighthouse," Conrad Aiken's "Blue Voyage," Liam O'Flaherty's "The Informer," intensely interesting as regards style and psychological treatment, and asks me to list more of these "new" novels.

BEFORE I attempt this, I wish that this inquirer would read the collection of literary criticisms called "Transition," by Edwin Muir (Viking). I do not know any book in which so much illumination may be found on the aims and methods of the new school. The books it names are such as this reader will welcome, but the principles it elucidates are worth even more to those who may be somewhat at sea as to what these authors are getting at. In the meantime, my best advice to D. C. W. is to read not only "To the Lighthouse," but also Mrs. Woolf's "Mrs. Dalloway" and "Jacob's Room," to notice the effect of these changes in psychological viewpoint on first novels in this country, as in Natalie Colby's "Green Forest" (Harcourt, Brace), and the delicately beautiful "Shadows Waiting," by Eleanor Chilton Day; and especially to examine the effect of an extraordinary susceptibility to present-day esthetic ideals upon an age-old inheritance of literary classicism, as shown in the writings of the three Sitwells—for an especially good beginning, the novel "Before the Bombardment" (Doran). This is a story of an old lady at a seaside resort in the winter, of her companion, and of the circle in which they move; it is slow as molasses, inevitable as existence, and understanding as if set down by some interested god, experienced but not involved in the ways of men.

A. S. K., Brooklyn, N. Y., asks if any other editions of the work of Winthrop Mackworth Praed are in existence than the small volume in "Morley's Classical Library" published at London by Routledge in 1887. He is anxious to get any others.

C. L. CANNON, Chief of the Acquisition Division of the N. Y. Public Library, tells me that the only editions available of the works of Praed are "Select Poems" (Oxford University Press, London 4/6) and "Essays," (Routledge 2/).

IF the inquirer who asked for information about John Buchan will send me his address, which I have mislaid, I will forward a folderful of data received for him from Houghton Mifflin. He is a Scot educated at Glasgow University and at Brasenose, Oxford, where he won, among other honors, the Stanhope Historical Essay and the Newdigate Prize, and was president of the Union. He was admitted to the Middle Temple in 1897 and has now crowned a brilliant career in politics by making a genuine sensation as a Member of Parliament. Meanwhile he has distinguished himself as a mountain-climber, an all-round sportsman, and found time to become by all odds the most popular novelist in England through his rapid-fire adventure stories such as "Greenmantle," and the one just out, "Witch Wood" (Houghton Mifflin). This record does not yet include his greatest work, the monumental four-volume popular "History of the Great War" (Houghton Mifflin); this is the most important work of its kind, and no public library or large collection should be without it. He lives in Oxford and commutes to London, which seems to me very nearly the Perfect Life.

R. B., Crestwood, N. Y., asks for a book that will help a young woman fit herself for the duties of a secretary.

I SUGGESTED several books like this some weeks ago, but since then one has appeared that will be especially useful to this inquirer: "Secretarial Training," by Edward J. McNamara, principal of the High School of Commerce (Ronald Press). This covers every branch of the subject, and is so arranged that a home-student may use it to advantage.

E. H. F., Meriden, Conn., asks how to get information about John Masefield and Edith Wharton.

"JOHN MASEFIELD," by W. H. Hamilton (Macmillan), is a book-length study of his life and works; Robert Morss Lovett's "Edith Wharton" (McBride), is one of the series of monographs on American authors published by this house. ff S my new book, "Adventures in Reading," is promised for publication by Stokes in September, I am especially interested in a pamphlet just issued by the University of North Carolina, called "Adventures in Reading," and prepared by Russell Potter, assistant professor of English there. However, it is along other lines than mine —which is intended for the use, and I hope the entertainment, of the late teens and early twenties, or for people not above listening to advice at any age on the formation of good reading habits. Professor Potter's book is a program for women's clubs, sent out by the University's Bureau of Public Discussion, which exerts a wide and beneficent influence in the State. It presents material for the study of current books, 1926-7: poetry, biography, philosophy, music, and travel, as well as several meetings devoted to novels. I have never seen better program help offered to book-study clubs than this, and I have made a few thousand programs myself at one time or another. There are now thirty-two of these study-outlines, on almost as many different subjects: a system of borrowing material for carrying them out is in use within the State.

ONE more librarian comes in, slightly puffing from the long run since John Hay's novel, "The Breadwinners," was published. At least *F. L., Ionia, Mich.,* who started her in this direction, says that though she "wouldn't go so far as to say that the heroine of 'The Bread-Winners' is a librarian, she is employed in a library."

I. I. W., Cleveland, Ohio, asks if there is a history of modern Scandinavian literature; he has looked for one in vain.

CONSIDERING the power and vitality of modern Scandinavian fiction and drama, considering the popularity in this country not only of Ibsen and Björnson, but more especially of the great contemporary novelists, Hamsun, Lagerlöf, Bojer, Nexö, and of the plays of Strindberg, it is curious that no English book has continued the sort of studies that Hjalmer Hjorth Boyesen began in "Essays on Scandinavian Literature" (Scribner). This is out of print; it goes from Bjornson to Brandes; an earlier history of Winkel Horn (Scott), is also out of print. Boyesen's book is in many public libraries; it has given many a student a start in this direction. If I am wrong in saying that there is no adequate history of Scandinavian literature in English published here—though the "Chapters in Norwegian Literature" of I. G. Grondahl and Ola Raknes is a Gyldendal publication sold in this country—I hope that the American Scandinavian Foundation will set me right. This admirable organization has been responsible for many a good book.

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Points of View

M. L. A.

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:
SIR:

Your Mr. Morley, too, has been guilty of attending meetings of the Modern Language Association (for haven't I seen him here?); and from remarks which you let slip occasionally, I suspect that he and I might sometime smoke a companionable pipeful together.

As I sit here smoking I remember one of those meetings, and my mind goes woolgathering about the association and what its members stand for. Fine fellows, many of them, and earnest, but . . . ! They spend their lives in applying what they call the scientific method to what is not scientific. They are trying to rationalize about the irrational, trying to *explain* literary art. They assume that reason is the *summum bonum* and a sort of master-key which will open the locked door and reveal the ultimate light. "And if reason won't, what will?" they would retort. As if we were assured that something would! As if life were under any obligations to us!

And the spirals of smoke from my pipe seem to take the shape of words; and what of the words I can grasp read something like this.

In a company all members of which are quite certain that they know what poetry is, need we stop to define it? And even if we needed to—how unwise to attempt it! But suppose we are so unsophisticated as to lack the conviction that because we have studied linguistics we know what poetry is—how then shall we go about learning? We might study the poets, to be sure; but, alas, we are told that although they write poetry they do not know what it is. This sounds a bit strange to us, a bit metaquizzical, like saying that what *is, is not*. The rabbit digs a burrow without knowing what a burrow is. Clearly we are unsophisticated; *il faut nous déniaiser*. An obvious retreat for us is to take a course on poetry in one of our great institutions of higher learning. Here is such a course, right under our noses, conducted by a man who has written several published and unpublished articles on the probable origin of the Spenserian stanza. Could we do better than to listen to him? See how deftly and peremptorily he dissects poetry into his categories of epic poetry, dramatic poetry, narrative poetry, etc.; and notice that he says *poetry*, not verse. And now listen while he explains that certain poems are anapestic, others iambic; that some rhyme abba others xyzxyz. And are we not edified with the names of ballad and ode, rondeau and sonnet? And if we have one spark of life in us, shall we not rise up and cry out: "By all that is holy, what has all this gibberish to do with poetry?" It has nothing whatever to do with it, of course; but the man who is talking at us will be sublimely unaware of it and will go on with his dull litany as undisturbed as if we had held our tongues.

But perhaps we are too easily discouraged or supercritical or just plainly sophomoric (a favorite word with teachers who find students more intelligent than they). In the very next room is the last speaker's colleague, and he is giving a course on some of the poets. May we not entertain a slight hope, especially since he is to talk today on Dante? Dante! The very sound of that name thrills us; and if the learned gentleman will only intimate what it is that makes Dante a poet, may we not then glimpse the *what* of poetry? An hour later, and oh, how our poor little hope has fallen! "Dante was born in 1265 and died in 1321. . . . The "Divina Commedia" is written in *terza rima*. . . . You may be interested to know that Dante has put Pope Nicholas III in the 8th circle of hell." No, we are not interested, *e quindi uscimmo a riveder le stelle;* but before hurrying out of that inferno, we noticed (and joyfully!) that the damned were few, and we remember having heard the lecturer complain that students were uninterested in poetry. Clever fellows, those students! And poor Dante! If he could have guessed, would he not have been so grateful to the man who taught him *come l'uom s'eterna?* And how satisfying to speculate on what he would have done with his commentators, he who put mere popes in deep hell! Poor Dante, we repeat; for he himself was a student, and he must have cherished the hope that he would long remain dear to students. And shall we believe that he could not be made to interest, even fascinate them? Supposing that in our day of relative and tentative truths, we could show our students how Dante believed in an Absolute Truth of such power and splendor that his reason was overwhelmed by it; and how, in his ardor to reveal his vision to his fellows in the hope that he might convince them as he had been convinced, he became so exalted that even now, when we may question the validity of his Truth for us, we are still profoundly moved by that earnestness and exaltation of his which are so intense that they often rise into sheer beauty; supposing we revealed something of this to our students, would they be indifferent to it? And suppose that instead of being choked with 1300 and 1301, they were shown that Dante is still vital because he can harrow our hearts as he did those of his contemporaries with such cries as that of Ugolino,

E se non piangi di che pianger suoli,

might they not suspect why Dante is a great poet and what poetry is? Better be ignorant of where Dante tucked away the popes than to miss the poetry of

Morta è la donna tua ch'era si bella!

From all of this we may deduce that poetry has no more connection with the *probable* facts of literary history than with the Johnsonian yardstick of versification. What poetry is we may never know; but as we remember Dante again, he makes us suspect that it may be the verbal record of ecstacy so recorded that it engenders ecstacy. So in reading Dante with our students, let us pause a little longer on the poetry and leap a little faster over the more or less meaningless impedimenta. These latter will still lie buried where we can wear away our lives in digging them up when poetry will cease to have meaning in the world.

Now my pipe's burnt out; but here's hoping that that companionable pipeful of ours may progress some day from the potential to the actual.

ALBERT EDMUND TROMBLY.

A Writer's Grievance

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
SIR:

Will you kindly grant me space to make a statement which, while it airs a personal grievance, illustrates the unhappy case of the writer in face of the laws affecting international copyright?

Some weeks ago The Modern Library, Publishers, New York, put out in their series a reprint of "The House with the Green Shutters" by George Douglas Brown. A friend on your side promptly called my attention to the fact that the reprint carried an "Introduction by George Blake." The Modern Library had not taken me into their confidence in the matter: so that I was not surprised to find on securing a copy of the book, that they had adapted for their purposes, without a word of acknowledgement, an article which I wrote for *John O'London's Weekly*, in January, 1924. This borrowing process is, I believe, known as piracy. For myself I should prefer a term with somewhat less romantic associations.

To be sure, The Modern Library have the civil, if not the moral, law on their side. I have no claim against them. Such is the dismal absence of reciprocity in copyright matters between our two countries. "Introduction Copyright, 1927, by The Modern Library, Inc.," says the flyleaf airily—and that's an end to my rights in my work.

It is possible that my agents may be able, on my behalf, to recover from the ashes a few dollars, but the injury caused by piracy of this kind is not to be measured in units quite so obvious as pounds and shillings, dollars and cents. The sting is in the fact that a piece of day-to-day journalism, designed deliberately for a popular audience, has been set up in permanent form and put before an important public as the writer's final views on a work of some importance. Now, apparently, it is not merely the writer's pocket, but even his shred of reputation, which may suffer through the actions of publishers.

GEORGE BLAKE.

London.

Miss Monroe Objects

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
SIR:

Midsummer being a season for wandering, I was away when your paper honored me by printing a review of my book, "Poets and This Art," a year or more after its publication. Reading the article after still another month, I am grieved to observe that your reviewer, Mr. Edward Davison, does not like my critical opinions—finds them parochial, geographical, incompetent, etc.

Well, let me admit that I never expected to agree with Mr. Davison, or any other exponent of the London *Mercury* school of criticism. American parochialism centered for so long in London that it is evidently a shock to a young English poet-professor, so amiably adopted by Vassar, to find anyone centering it in Illinois. At the present moment I would merely question a few of Mr. Davison's statements and implications:

Does he not deliberately confound the critical and the anecdotal sections of this book?

Does he not somewhat maliciously select for quotation and discussion merely what he considers the worst of it?

Is it so criminal to find "immediate beauty" in Langland and certain of his old-English predecessors? [The mention of Gower among these was Mr. Davison's, not mine.]

And may I question the accuracy of the following statement: "Mushroom enthusiasms stud every other page of her book with the word 'masterpiece'."

No doubt mushroom enthusiasms are to be deplored almost as much as toadstool criticisms; but it is possible that Americans are usually too deprecatory in acknowledging indebtedness to their living poets, in analyzing the quality and value of their work, and a little too ready to accept as gospel the utterances of any wandering Englishman who comes over here, as an Irish observer wittily remarked, "with a London cachet and a dress-suit from Bond Street."

HARRIET MONROE.

A New Method?

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
SIR:

Appreciating the fairness of the critic who reviewed Joseph Kling's "Dream Tapestry" for you, may I say a word as one who holds a rather higher opinion of that book?

It doesn't seem to me a great or weighty book, and I fancy Mr. Kling would not advance it as such, but it does seem to me a very interesting book, a subtle book, highly readable, a commentary on a contemporaneous situation which to be sure is not unusual, but which is humanized to a rare degree by two qualities not always found in combination—irony and compassion. As your reviewer says, it is a sort of novel, but I am not sure it is a novel in verse because I am not sure that it is verse; it is prose, I think, but dithyrambic prose, the lines broken in a subtle correspondence with the movement of the story and the psychological currents; achieving at times a fine rhythm. I recall nothing quite like it; it is not like Whitman nor Masters nor Sandburg nor the Imagists, not as poetic; but as rhythmic prose to carry a sophisticated story in, as your reviewer says, a kind of ticker-tape abbreviation, it is apt and effective. And if the story so told is far from unusual, it is one which is always poignant. It is a story which can always easily be made vulgar and ridiculous, but which always has deep human pathos for one who can so see it, as Kling does.

It seems to me that irony, and a deft art which like a sharp knife cuts away unessentials, appear in a passage like this:

And so,
while the Puppet expatiates on the primary bases of
expressionism, the Prisoner keeps shouting,
Fraud! hypocrite! imbecile!
You know you don't give a tinker's damn about expressionism!
The dainty roundness of the girl's breasts—
the curve of her lips—
the soft firmness of her body—
that's what you want to chant about,
and embrace,
and possess. . . .

And that there is art, too, and compassion, in this:

The train started—moved—
faster—faster. . . .

A curve, . . .
and his life vanished.

And in this (referring, like the preceding passage, to a man's loss of the mistress who had made his more-than-middle-age young and sweet for a time):

Age,
Death's understrapper,
suddenly made his appearance,
to prepare the ground
for his Master.

Too straight, the body's tower;—
must be brought nearer
to the ground. . . .
He pressed on the shoulders,
and they bowed.

Face too smooth,
eyes too clear. . . .

His fingers pinched, and dug, and graved . . .
The cheeks drooped;
the faint blue under the eyes
swelled and darkened;
the keen glance wilted. . . .

A deft thump under the heart:
its hope grew stark and still. . . .

I wonder, indeed, if Mr. Kling may not here have discovered a new way of telling stories, a new technique of the novel, a ticker-tape or Morse code technique very much in line with the spirit and tendencies of the times? "Not true art," says your reviewer. Not great art, I concede, but may it not be a true new art? While Joyce and Gertrude Stein, like balloons that have slipped from the hand, float up and disappear in the beautiful but clueless heaven of words, may not Mr. Kling, in this unpretentious but interesting book, be showing us the next extension of the path opened, say, by Dos Passos and others?

SHAEMAS O'SHEEL.

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The World of Rare Books

By FREDERICK M. HOPKINS

GRAPHIC ARTS PUBLICATIONS

THREE books published, one under way and a fifth in the final stage of preparation, is the record of the publications committee of the American Institute of Graphic Arts, as reported in the summer issue of the *News-Letter*, just issued. The committee considers itself exceptionally fortunate in finding a publisher in the John Day Company, a company which in its own productions and programme shares the ideals of the Institute. The first three books published are "Fifty Books, Exhibited in 1926," "Fifty Prints, Exhibited in 1926," and "Printing for Commerce, Exhibited in 1926." The fourth book of the Institute series, "A Plan for the Teaching of Printing in Public Schools," by Henry H. Taylor of San Francisco, is now being printed by the Merrymount Press in Boston, and will be ready for delivery to members of the Institute before the end of this month. The fifth book is "The Standardization of Process Colors," a large and elaborate book, printed in four process colors, representing the results of the researches of the Committee of the Standardization of Process Colors, which has been giving this subject intensive study. The material, it is expected, will be ready for the printer before the end of the year, but the production will be an elaborate job and it will probably be well into next year before the book is ready for delivery. The next four books planned will reproduce the four current exhibitions of the Institute. The fact that substantial sacrifices were necessary to make the beginning already made indicates that the committee's problem still lacks a solution. The committee urges that members of the Institute help toward this solution by buying its publications and by urging their friends to buy. Book-lovers interested in fine printing should not overlook these publications. They will form an important part of the record of typographical progress of our time.

HARVARD PUBLICATIONS

THE autumn list of publications of the Harvard University Press just issued contains the announcement of several publications of interest to collectors. The most important of all is Blake's "Illustrations to Young's Night Thoughts" which contains thirty reproductions, five in color and twenty-five in monotone, from a unique copy of Young's "Night Thoughts" now in the Fogg Museum at Harvard, in the margins of which William Blake painted a series of illustrations never before published. Geoffrey Keynes contributes an introductory essay. The edition is limited to 500 copies. A volume that will be of special interest to Boswell and Johnson collectors is "A New Portrait of James Boswell," by C. B. Tinker and F. A. Pottle. This is an illustrated monograph discussing a little-known portrait of James Boswell now in Edinburgh. American collectors, especially of the Revolutionary War period, will be interested in "Letters of a Loyalist," written by Anne Hulton to a friend of hers in England during the pre-revolutionary period of 1767 to 1776. These letters present a vivid first hand picture of the years just preceding the final separation of the colonies from the mother country. The edition is limited to 740 copies. A biography, "Francesca Alexander," by Constance G. Alexander, tells the life story of the famous friend of Ruskin and a host of other noted literary people of the nineteenth century. The book in the words of Professor George Herbert Palmer, will appeal "to the little company of those who, oppressed by a garish literature, have kept their taste for homely events, beautiful characters, and a diction showing everywhere acquaintance with those who in former times knew how to use our English speech." The volume is fully illustrated.

DR. ROSENBACH'S SURPRISE

DR. ROSENBACH'S enterprise in getting his pick of the gems of the great Holford collection is still the great topic of gossip among booksellers and collectors of Europe and America. That these books could have been purchased, shipped to America, and have been in the possession of the Rosenbach Company for many months, and that it was done so quietly that the general public, either of England or America, knew nothing about it, is certainly remarkable. A writer in the London *Times* referring to Dr. Rosenbach's purchase says:

"In the obituary notices of the late Sir George Holford, and in the more recent announcements of the sales of the art collections and library at Dorchester House and Westonbirt, there were references to the fact before his death Sir George Holford had sold privately some of his rare books to Dr. Rosenbach. The transaction was kept secret by mutual arrangement, and it was only at the time of his death that the sale was mentioned. The details that then leaked out were very meager. It was said that he had sold his Shakespeare Folios and Quartos, the famous first edition of Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," and the set of Walton's "Angler, and a few other books. As a matter of fact, the 'ideal' involved the sale of the choicest books in the Holford library and formed one of the biggest single transactions in rare books since the purchase of the late Mrs. Rylands in 1892 of the Spencer library for about £250,000."

"SUSQUEHANNA PAPERS"

THE Wyoming Historical and Genealogical Society of Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, has decided to publish the valuable manuscript material which has recently come into its possession relating to the early settlement of the Wyoming Valley in the colonial era under the auspices of the Susquehanna Company. This material, known as the "Susquehanna Papers," is of great interest and importance and will throw a flood of light upon the occupation of the region around Wilkes-Barre by a group of Connecticut settlers in the decade preceding the Revolution, which led to the Pennsylvania-Connecticut controversy over Wyoming lands. The editing of these papers has been entrusted to Dr. Wayland Fuller Dunaway, Professor of History in the Pennsylvania State College. The society and the editor solicit the cooperation of individuals and organizations in notifying them of any manuscript material in their possession relating to the important subject.

PATIENCE OF LINCOLN

THE patience and forbearance of Abraham Lincoln in dealing with turbulent factions in the Union Army during the darkest days of the Civil War have just been revealed in a collection of hitherto unpublished letters purchased in England by Harry F. Marks, rare book dealer of this city, and brought to this country a short time ago. A letter, showing the characteristic fairness of the War President, was written to Major General Franz Sigel, apologizing for a pardonable irritation at the extravagant demands of the Eleventh Corps of the Union forces during the crucial early months of 1863:

"Executive Mansion, Washington.
February 5, 1863.

"Major General Sigel,

"My dear Sir:

"General Schurz thinks I was a little cross in my late note to you. If I was, I ask your pardon. If I do get up a little temper I have no sufficient time to keep it up.

"I believe that I will not now issue any new order in relation to the matter in question; but I will be obliged, if General Hooker consistently can, and will gve an increased cavalry command to General Stahl. You may show General Hooker this letter if you choose.

"Yours truly,
"ABRAHAM LINCOLN."

On the back of a letter in the same collection written by General Sigel to President Lincoln, which evidently annoyed him, is the following indorsement:

"I believed that an increased cavalry force would be valuable, but I have not promised that, to suit the convenience of any officer. I would, however inconvenient to the Government, raise one immediately. I have tried, in regard to General Schurz and General Stahl, to oblige all around, but it seems to get worse and worse.

"If General Sigel would say distinctly, and unconditionally, what he desires now about the command of the forces he has, I would try to do it, but when he has plans, conditioned upon my raising new forces, which is inconvenient for me to do, it is drawing upon me too severely."

The ownership of the old house at Seventeenth Street and Irving Place, the home of Washington Irving in the early 50's, was recently acquired by the National Patriotic Builders of America, Inc.

Enrolments for
Short Story Writing
group beginning September 13
under the personal direction of
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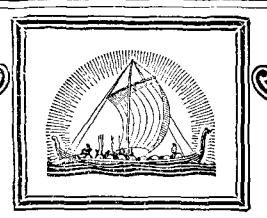

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The Phoenix Nest

WHATEVER *O'Reilley* be doing back in New York we have been having varied and interesting experiences out in the golden remote wild west. We have for several weeks been sorting out our memories of the Bohemian Grove and of a later visit to La Cuesta Encantada, the Enchanted Hill of one *William Randolph Hearst*, a modern Aladdin's dream set among bare, brown, rolling ranges within sight of the sea far down the coast. . . .

First the Grove. We arrived there via automobile with the author of "Zelda Marsh," *Ray Long*, editor of the *Cosmopolitan*, and *Roy Howard* of the Scripps-Howard newspapers. The particular camp that was our habitat was known as "T N T." All over the Grove various groups of men have established various separate camps. The noble redwoods upthrust and flourish everywhere. One strays and visits other camps and one's meals are either taken in the open-air dining space of the Grove or as the guest of some particular rendezvous. We were introduced to "Mandalay," "The Rattlers," "Woof" camp, and many more. The spirit is convivial. One night we sat up all night by the embers of a camp-fire. A number of evenings we strayed late through the camp beguiled by snatches of song and story. The Grove play was, of course, the *pièce de résistance* of the entertainment. It occurred on Saturday night. On Friday night a lesser entertainment was staged in a lesser amphitheatre, an informal *mélange* of "stunts" and singing. Then there was the concert of the Grove play music on Sunday morning. There was also a recitation Saturday morning by a young Russian pianist. . . .

This was the twenty-seventh Grove play of the Bohemian Club of San Francisco. It was "a pageant ceremonial" based upon the life of Saint Francis of Assisi and written by *Irving Pichel*, with music by *Charles Hart*. It was performed by the Bohemian Club members in their Grove which is in Sonoma County, California, on the sixth night of August. Hitherto the orchestra for the Grove play had been engaged professionally, but this time the music was played by the Bohemian Club Symphony Orchestra, amateur musicians all members of the club. The famous *Lawrence Tibbett* sang the title rôle of Francesco, later Saint Francis. The play dealt "in allegorical fashion with three phases in the life history of the ascetic monk who founded the Order of Franciscan Friars and in whose memory, six centuries later, the city by the Golden Gate was named." . . .

This was our first vision of the superb natural back-drop of the Bohemian Grove outdoor theatre. It is a hillside of soaring redwoods. The audience is seated under towering trees. The prologue began by the sounding in darkness of a thin, clear trumpet-call. Then the high hillside was suddenly illuminated to reveal the figure of a crusader bearing a cross-emblazoned banner. Our first sight of this phenomenal lighting of a majestic natural background impressed us deeply. Later we heard the electric lighting criticized. More beautiful effects, we understood, had been secured in the past by other means. But to us the revelation surpassed our expectation. And the pageantry in the early part of the play, on the large stage with its gorgeous vistas, delighted our heart. . . .

For closet reading the book of the play did not strike us as distinguished; but the direction, the music, the costuming, and, above all, the glorious voice of Lawrence Tibbett, made of it a thing of unique beauty. The intermissions were a thought long and the progress of the play episodic rather than sequential, but many scenes were marvelously spectacular. There is no theatre like this, that we know of, elsewhere in the world. Long and arduous preparation went to the perfecting of this one performance. The Bohemian Grove seems to us the one place in the world where a really great poetic drama, in key of course with the setting and its natural resources, might be most effectively produced. We heard later of the late *George Sterling's* former Grove play "Truth" which is said to have been of notable stature—as indeed it well might be—as a written play. There are tremendous possibilities in production in the Grove. We feel that we have been extremely fortunate in being allowed to witness one of the annual Grove plays. Such performances must be intensely stimulating to the imagination of any artist. . . .

We had hardly returned from the Grove when our gracious hosts whirled us away on a two hundred and fifty mile drive down the Coast to the extraordinary edifices Mr. Hearst has raised as by a weird enchantment on a height of brown, bare, folded hills inland from the Pacific. One climbs newly made roads with many a harpin turn, passing an actual herd of zebras with a giraffe or two in the offing. No, that is not imagination—the animals are actually there! Finally one comes to the full efflorescence of towers girdled by casas seemingly transplanted bodily from the coast of the Mediterranean, to a gorgeous mountain oasis of trees and flowers and the most marvelous swimming pool we have ever seen in our life. It was strangely torrid on the heights. The spectacle of the fog at sunset lying beneath and around this eyrie like an ocean of frozen undulations was breath-taking. All the dwellings were stuffed with priceless antique, and the main building was a wilderness of rooms fit for a Renaissance palace. Back of this, at some distance, is a menagerie wherein drowsed or ambulated lion, Bengal tiger, bears, lynxes, leopards, and even a peripatetic badger. There were monkeys and macaws; kangaroos and coyotes. Our room in the Casa del Sol made us feel like a Cesare Borgia. The swimming pool made us long for a life entirely natatorial. Though no roasted peacock appeared on the table, the profusion and delicacy of the viands exalted our palate. In its entirety this was a remarkable experience. It suggested to us a number of fantastic stories. The place is unbelievable, and now that San Simeon is again so far away, we can hardly believe that this weird fabulousness exists in aught save our imagination. To be sure, we have memories of scaffolding and workmen, for the place is still in progress of completion, but we were constantly haunted there by plots possible to a Conan Doyle. Having left the golden stare of the leopard in the menagerie, we skirted the main palace and came upon a large packing box on end in which, as we peered more closely, we perceived one of the cat-headed gods of the Nile carved seated out of a single block of—what would it be—black basalt? Sekhmet the lion-headed and the tutelary Bast pressed upon our imagination too closely for comfort. And *Lorenzo the Magnificent* would have been bewildered in that mountain fastness. Beasts are secret things and so are the lingering phantoms of ancient grandeur, of ancient gods. We were somewhat ill at ease with such exiles ever at our shoulder. . . .

The fifth number of *transition*, August, 1927, has found its way across the continent to us, and we see that a poet native to California, *Genevieve Taggard*, is now a contributor. Her sketch is, indeed, one of the best things in the number, which opens with a story by *Ernest Hemingway* which we do not entirely understand. There are also *Joyce*, of course, *Picasso*, *Jolas*, and *Elliot Paul*, the editors. But the contribution we have liked the best is a story by *Ruth Pine Furniss*, entitled "Clay." Here is the hand of the artist. Ruth Pine Furniss, we learn from *transition's* glossary, "is the wife of a physician and the mother of a large family, living in a suburb of New York. She has been writing steadily for fifteen years, in spite of these apparently insurmountable obstacles to a woman's career." Yet, we venture to wonder whether it is not just *because* of these obstacles that she manifests a more fundamental power than most of the writer's in *transition*. She has lived her life fully, she has been in no danger of succumbing to barren esthetics. Art often thrives upon difficulties, though not always. . . .

We really can't write any more now, among all these trees and in all this sunlight. The good weather in California gets positively *monotonous*. The sky maintains a flawless blue. We don't know what to do about it. All we want to do is to laze and dream or play tennis or plunge in the pool. Our carping critical mind is for the time being in abeyance. Too soon we must return to the fitful New York climate and share with O'Reilley our hodiernal crust. Well, meanwhile—us for a swim!

THE PHOENICIAN.

"King Lear" has just been added to the Players' Edition of Shakespeare, making the seventh volume so far published. *The Fleuron*, the leading typographical journal of England, regards this edition as one of the monuments of twentieth century book making. The text is that of the First Folio. Each volume contains a lengthy and important introduction, and is illustrated in color and black and white. There are two limited editions, one on hand-made paper, the other on all-rag paper.

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Up to Thursday night, 5,109 copies of *Trader Horn* have been sold this week—a new high record.

The Inner Sanctum has just received a blistering memorandum from the manufacturing department, correcting a statement in last week's column. Apparently we erred in announcing that *The Story of Philosophy* had gone into its 167th thousand. The joke's on us; it was really the 172nd.

Monday *The Story of Philosophy* celebrated its fourteenth successive month on the nation-wide best-seller list—ranking first, by a wide margin, most of the time, especially during the last eleven months.

Of all members of *The Inner Sanctum* staff, the one who received most mail this week was Francis Bacon, patron saint of the SIMON AND SCHUSTER —FORUM MAGAZINE $7,500 *Award for the Humanizing of Knowledge.*

Without broadcasting the intimacies of the jury room, we can report that FREDERICK HAZLITT BRENNAN'S new novel, *God Got One Vote*, got at least one vote for the last Book-of-the-Month accolade. WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE, the eminent literary magistrate of Emporia, Kansas, makes no secret of his ballot.

More than that, WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE ordered ten copies of *God Got One Vote* for his friends; that is the unimpeachable tribute.

Concerning the personality of W. L. RIVER, author of *Death of a Young Man*, we have been singularly reticent. Not only did Mr. River request this silence—he has rigorously insisted upon it, in the face of many tempting invitations for publicity. He prefers to let his novel speak for itself.

After reading *Death of a Young Man*, a distinguished novelist telegraphed *The Inner Sanctum* for some information about the author. We finally wrung from him permission to dispatch this night letter in reply:

> RIVER is twenty-four. Graduate University Chicago. Deeply interested biology psychology music. Spent rigorous literary apprenticeship on Staten Island. Followed by six months work on transatlantic freighter. His special interests among modern writers are SCHNITZLER and PROUST.

On Friday, September 30, WILL DURANT returns from Europe, and we shall celebrate the event by publishing on that date his new book, *Transition, A Mental Autobiography*.

Transition is "a remembrance of things past," set down *con amore*, a chronicle of changing faiths, an intimate "total perspective" in which this historian and lover of wisdom looks at life and love. *Transition* is so frank, so movingly written, so charged with the personality of WILL DURANT, that *The Inner Sanctum* cannot take a detached critical view of it.

Remember the publication date—Friday, September 30th, and the title: *Transition, A Mental Autobiography* by WILL DURANT.

—ESSANDESS

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